

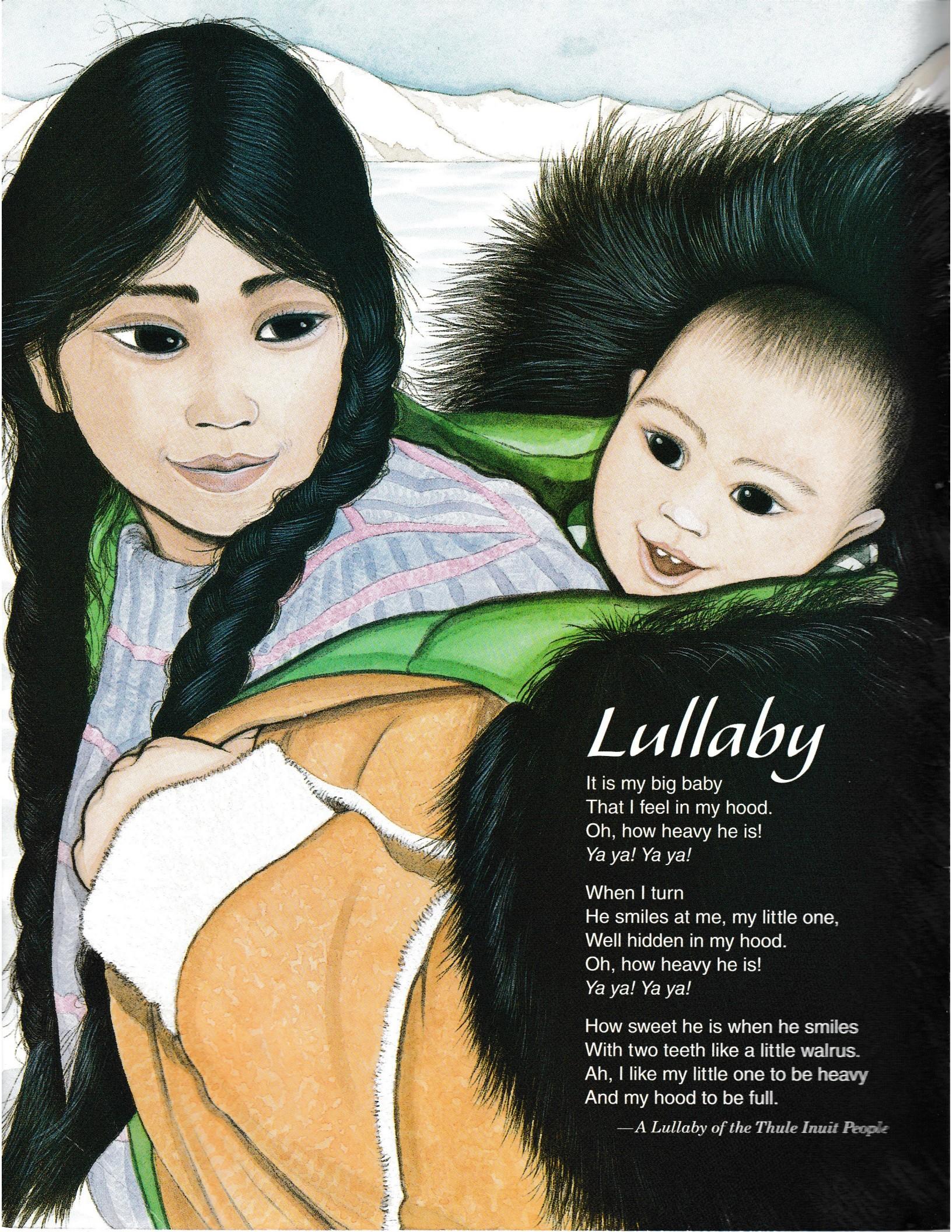
Highlights

for Children®

DECEMBER 2003

Fun with a Purpose®





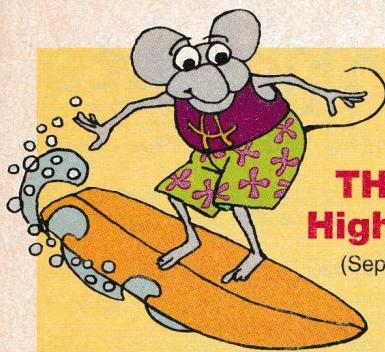
Lullaby

It is my big baby
That I feel in my hood.
Oh, how heavy he is!
Ya ya! Ya ya!

When I turn
He smiles at me, my little one,
Well hidden in my hood.
Oh, how heavy he is!
Ya ya! Ya ya!

How sweet he is when he smiles
With two teeth like a little walrus.
Ah, I like my little one to be **heavy**
And my hood to be full.

—*A Lullaby of the Thule Inuit People*



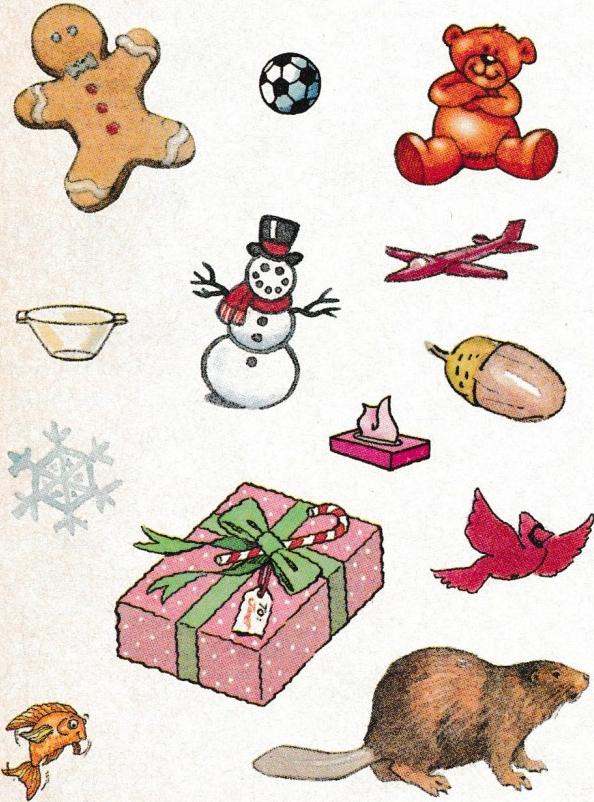
**THIS MONTH ON
HighlightsKids.com**
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- Check out our Maze Maker.
- Try a cookie recipe.
- Play loads of cover-art games!
- See more paintings by Oscar Howe.
- Make a chrismon ornament.
- Sneak a Peek into January.

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Find the Pictures

Can you find each of these pictures at another place in this book?



Highlights for Children®

DECEMBER 2003

VOLUME 58 • NUMBER 12 • ISSUE NO. 626

Special to This Issue

- | | |
|--------------------------------|-----------|
| 2 Lullaby | ◆ ■ |
| 5 The Chrismon Tree | ■ ● □ |
| 6 Jacob and the Baby-Sitter | ◆ ▲ |
| 9 Baby Mouse's Big Idea | ★ ◆ ▲ |
| 10 Weirdest of All | ■ ▲ ○ |
| 12 Winter Sports | ◆ ■ ▲ □ |
| 16 Elephant Grandmothers | ■ |
| 19 The Feast of Lights | ■ ● |
| 20 The Man Who Painted Truth | ■ ▲ ○ □ |
| 22 A Dress for the Moon | ◆ ○ |
| 26 Cookie Science | ◆ ■ ▲ □ |
| 28 Holiday Traditions | ◆ ■ ▲ ○ □ |
| 33 A Christmas Grace | ◆ ■ ○ □ |
| 36 Eva's Eggflip | ■ ● |
| 40 Why Does a Woodpecker Peck? | ◆ |
| 43 Order in the Kitchen | ★ ◆ ■ ▲ □ |

Regular Features

- | | |
|------------------------------|-----------|
| 8 Science Letters | ■ □ |
| 13 Nature Watch | ◆ ■ ▲ |
| 14 Hidden Pictures™ | ★ ◆ ■ ▲ □ |
| 15 Riddles | ◆ □ |
| 18 Thinking | ★ ◆ ■ ▲ |
| 19 Tongue Twisters; Matching | ★ ◆ ■ ▲ □ |
| 24 For Wee Folks | ★ ◆ ▲ |
| 25 Science Corner | ◆ ■ ▲ |
| 27 Goofus and Gallant® | ◆ ○ □ |
| 30 You Can Make It! | ◆ ■ ▲ □ |
| 32 The Bear Family | ★ ◆ ○ |
| 33 Jokes | ◆ □ |
| 34 Our Own Pages | ★ ◆ ■ ▲ |
| 38 The Timbertoes | ★ ◆ □ |
| 39 Headwork | ★ ◆ ■ ▲ |
| 42 Dear Highlights | ◆ ■ ○ □ |

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This book of wholesome fun is dedicated to helping children grow in basic skills and knowledge, in creativeness, in ability to think and reason, in sensitivity to others, in high ideals and worthy ways of living—for children are the world's most important people.



Dear Readers,

This month's cover looks like pure make-believe, but it is partly true. The room shown is in our editorial offices, and in early December, it looks a lot like this picture. Just as in the illustration, we decorate a fresh pine tree—but ours nearly touches the room's 12-foot ceiling. Of course, it's the editors who string the lights and hang the ornaments—not the Timbertoes, the Bear Family, or Goofus and Gallant. But isn't it fun to imagine the magazine's characters gathering together for a party like this?

Our staff enjoys making our offices look festive for December's holidays. But we have even more fun when we throw open the doors and invite family and neighbors inside for our annual Holiday Open House. On that cold, wintry day, our offices overflow with music, storytelling, good food, and laughter. Afterward, we all agree that one of the season's best gifts is time to spend with the people we care about.

We loved reading about some of your favorite holiday traditions (pages 28 and 29). Each story shared was about happy times spent with loved ones. We hope this December brings you many more.

Your friend,

Christine

Christine French Clark, Editor
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Covers: Holiday Time at Highlights and What's Wrong? by Ron Zalme

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Wait! Shouldn't that be *Christmas* tree?

Well, yes and no. The *chrismon* tree is a special kind of Christmas tree. It is decorated only with ornaments that remind people of Jesus Christ, whose birthday is celebrated at Christmas by Christians.

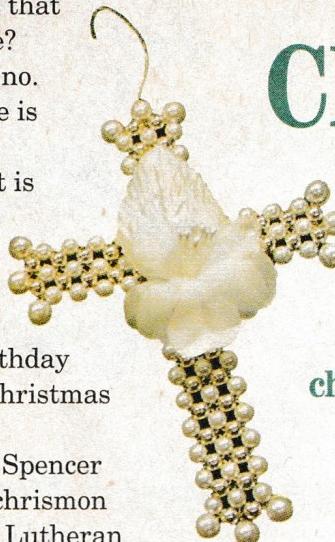
Frances Kipps Spencer created the first chrismon tree at Ascension Lutheran Church of Danville, Virginia, in 1957. She used centuries-old symbols to create ornaments that seemed just right for a Christian setting.

Unlike most Christmas decorations, chrismon ornaments don't come in rainbow colors or even red and green. They are always white and gold—white for purity, gold for majesty and glory.

The word chrismon is taken from *Christ's Monogram*. Some of the decorations are actual monograms—the initials of Jesus' name.

Other ornaments are more symbolic. Butterflies brighten many chrismon trees. Looking at the butterfly, some Christians think of the caterpillar (which represents Christ's life on Earth), the chrysalis (for Christ in the tomb), and the butterfly (new life in the risen Christ).

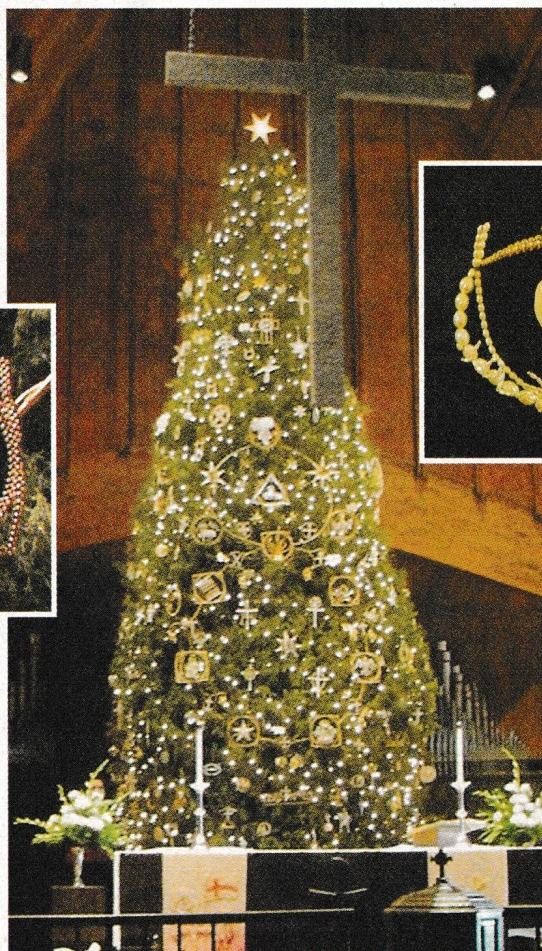
People may wonder what the peacock, another chrismon symbol, has to do with Christmas.



The Chrismon Tree

By Polly Tillman

Looking at the first chrismon tree, a church member exclaimed, "It is the first real Christmas tree I have ever seen!"



The ornaments on this chrismon tree hold special meaning for Lutherans and other Christians.

Peacocks also offer a symbol of new life. Each year the peacock sheds its brilliant feathers to grow new, more glorious ones.

Another unusual symbol is the pomegranate. This exotic fruit is mostly seeds, again suggesting new life.

The seashell is a popular chrismon ornament. In the early church, a shell was sometimes used to dip the water at baptism, a ceremony that symbolizes acceptance into the Christian faith.

Several chrismon patterns include circles, because a circle has no beginning or ending, like Jesus' love for humankind, which Christians believe lasts forever. Triangles are used as well. They represent the Trinity, which, according to Christian belief, is the union of three divine persons: God the Father, Jesus the Son, and the Holy Spirit. The shape of a dove also represents the Holy Spirit.

Many chrismon ornaments are crosses of different kinds. To Lutherans, a cross with rays, like a rising sun, represents Christ's victory over death. The Calvary Cross stands on three steps that mean faith, hope, and charity.

Christmas is a special time in the Christian calendar, and decorating a Christmas tree is a special part of

the celebration. A chrismon tree can help to remind Christians why they are celebrating.



Jacob and the Baby-Sitter

By Kristin M. Lord

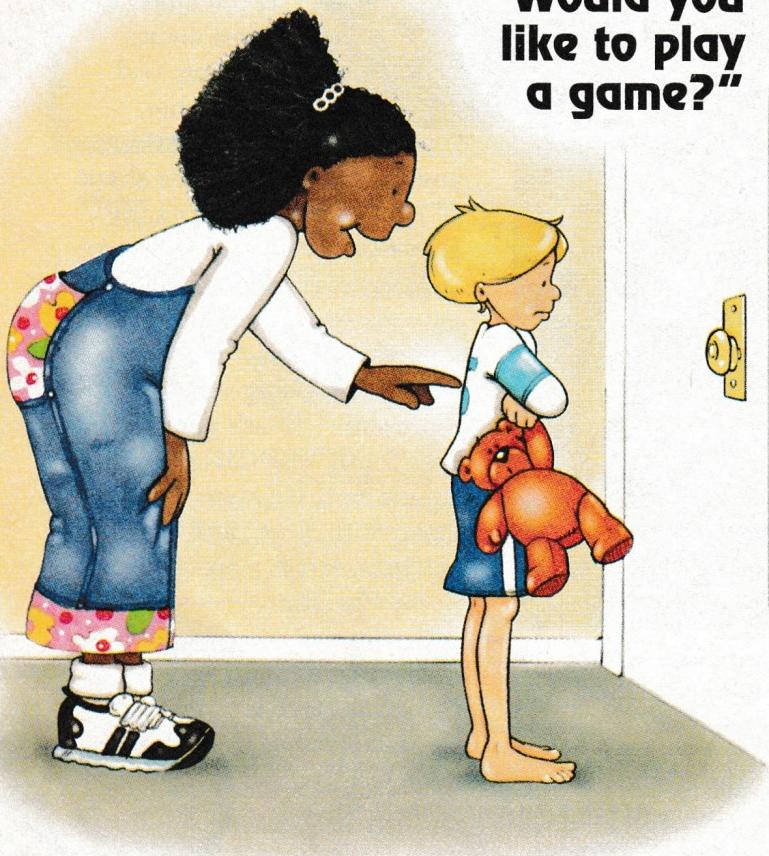
"Good-bye, Jacob!" said Mom, kissing his cheek.

"Have fun, Jacob!" said Dad, waving good-bye. "We'll see you in a few hours." The door shut behind them.

"Well, Jacob, what should we do?" asked the baby-sitter. "Would you like to play a game?"

"No," said Jacob, crossing his arms. "I want Mom and Dad to come back."

"Would you like to play a game?"



"We reached the top!"

"I know," said the baby-sitter. "But for now, I am going to play mountain climber." And she began to climb slowly up the stairs.

"I want Mom and Dad to come back," said Jacob. But he began to climb, too. They kicked snow out of the way and climbed higher than anyone had ever climbed before.

"We reached the top!" said the baby-sitter, throwing her arms in the air. "Hooray for us!"

"Hooray for us!" said Jacob. Together they looked at the view.

"Would you like to play another game?" asked the baby-sitter.

"No," said Jacob. "I want Mom and Dad to come back."

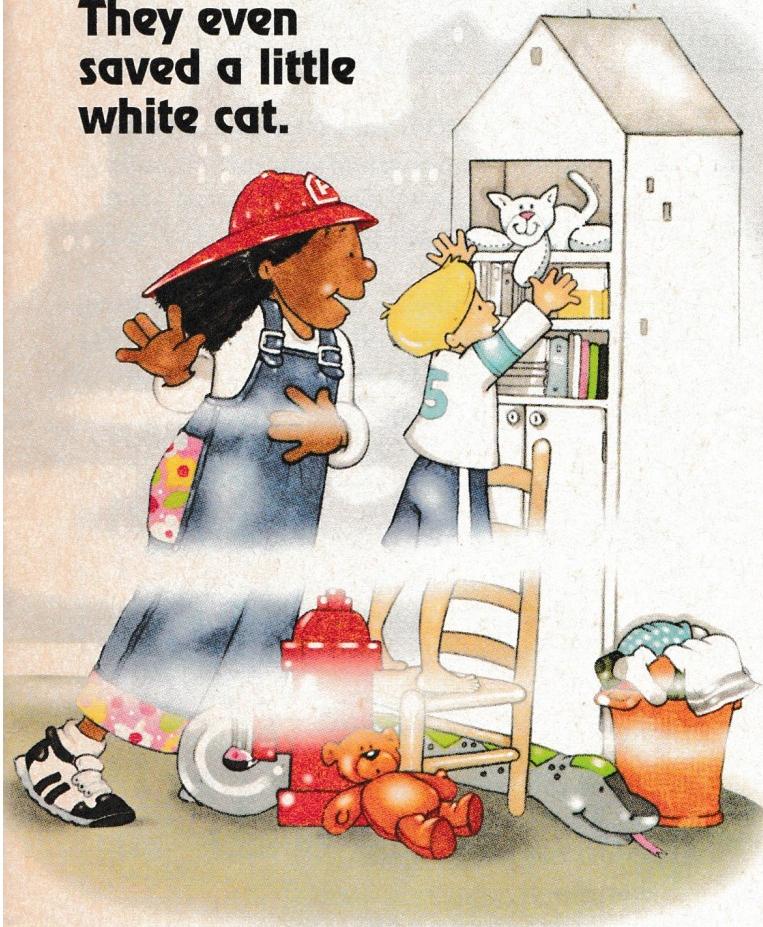
"I know," said the baby-sitter. "But for now, I am going to play fire fighter." She began to spray a pretend fire hose.

"I want Mom and Dad to come back," said Jacob again. But he began to spray a pretend fire hose, too. They kept a house from burning and even saved a little white cat.

"Hooray for us!" said the baby-sitter.

"Hooray for us!" said Jacob. Together they received a medal for bravery.

They even saved a little white cat.

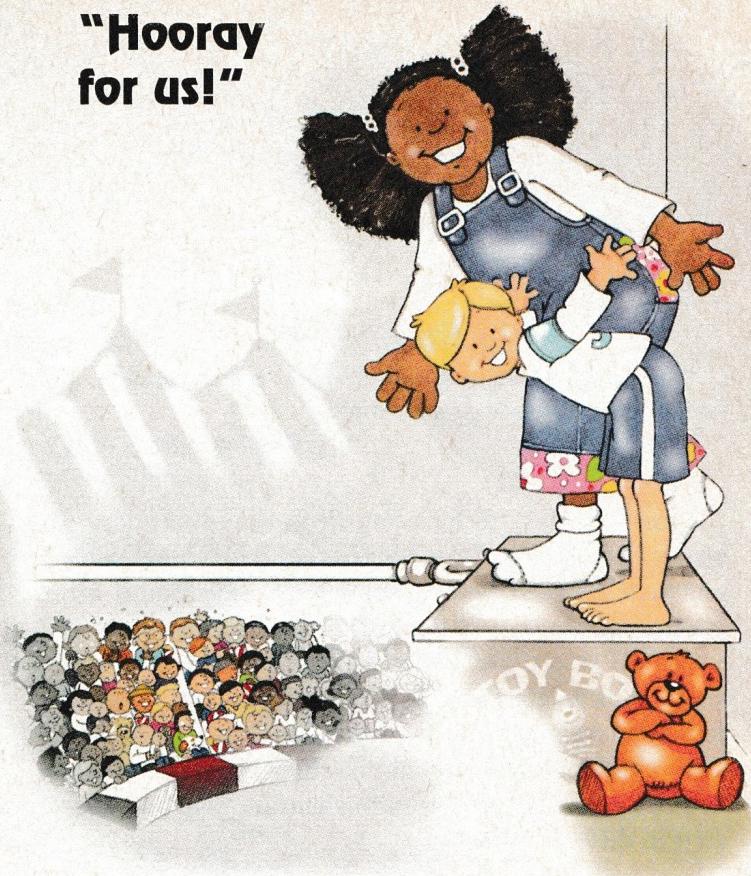


"Would you like to play another game?" asked the baby-sitter.

"No," said Jacob. "I want Mom and Dad to come back."

"I know," said the baby-sitter. "But for now, I am going to play circus." She held out her arms and began to walk across an imaginary tightrope. "I want Mom and Dad to come back," said Jacob.

**"Hooray
for us!"**



But he began to walk across the imaginary tightrope, too. At last they reached the other side.

"Hooray for us!" said the baby-sitter.

"Hooray for us!" said Jacob. The audience cheered while they took a bow.

Jacob heard the keys in the lock. He ran to the door and gave his parents a big hug.

"It's good to see you, too," said his mother, smiling.

"Good-bye, Jacob," said the baby-sitter. "I had fun."

A little while later, Jacob sat quietly, watching his father cook dinner. "What's wrong, Jacob?" his father asked.

"I want the baby-sitter to come back," said Jacob. "But you and Mom can stay home, too."

Science Letters

Answered by Jack Myers, Ph.D., Senior Science Editor

Fly Feet

When a fly walks and then stops, it starts rubbing its feet together. Why does it do that?

Banah Ghadbian, Age 7
Arkansas

I am fortunate to have many observant readers. I also am fortunate to have friends who know some parts of science better than I do. My friend Dr. Osmond Breland said the following.

"As an insect moves about, small bits of dust and trash stick to its body. If it did not clean this off, it could not walk or fly very well. Maybe you have seen a cat cleaning up by licking itself or rubbing its face with its paws. Insects need to clean up, too, and they do it in different ways.

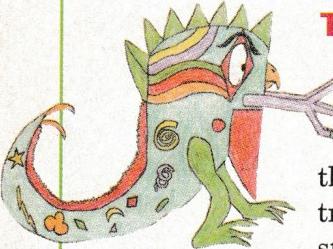


"Some insects, like cockroaches, clean their legs and feet by putting them in their mouths and pulling the legs through their teeth. Trash is pulled off the legs into the mouth. To us, that seems like a dirty way to clean up.

"A fly cleans up by rubbing its feet (really its front legs) together. It also rubs its wings with its hind legs. And if you watch a fly closely, you may see it rub its head with its front legs."

Creatures Nobody Has Ever Seen!

The Ididit



The Ididit is a creature that is about three feet tall. He is brightly colored in every color of the rainbow. He is always getting into trouble. He throws dirt and toys and stuff all over your house. He eats homework, breaks machines, makes scary-looking shadows, and tries to get people in trouble. He goes invisible when you look at him, so that's why nobody has ever seen him.

Amie Condon, Age 12, Alaska

The Opposite Monster

If you say, "Are you the opposite monster?" it will say, "No."

Ben Tidswell, Age 6
Massachusetts



The Weathr'omonster

When you want to do something
But the skies won't cooperate,
The weathr'omonster comes and
helps
And makes the weather great.



But then your next-door neighbor
Wants weather that's opposite;
It doesn't matter. Only his
changes—
Yours doesn't change a bit!

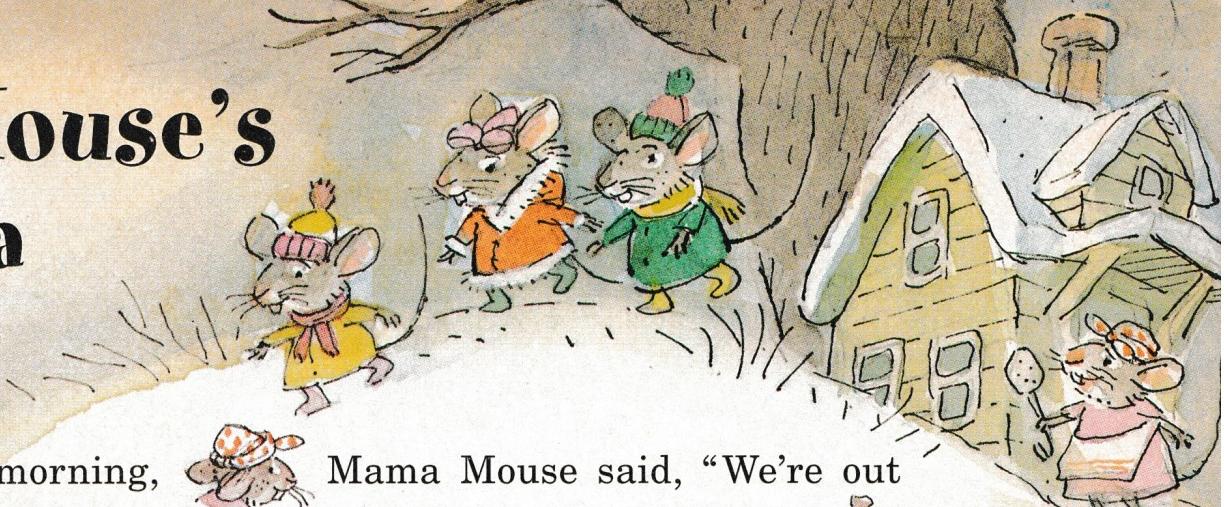
So next time that you want to swim
But the weather is really wrong,
Just ask the weathr'omonster to come.
He'll change the weather—"Ba-Bong!"

Zoya Dushaj, Age 11
Michigan

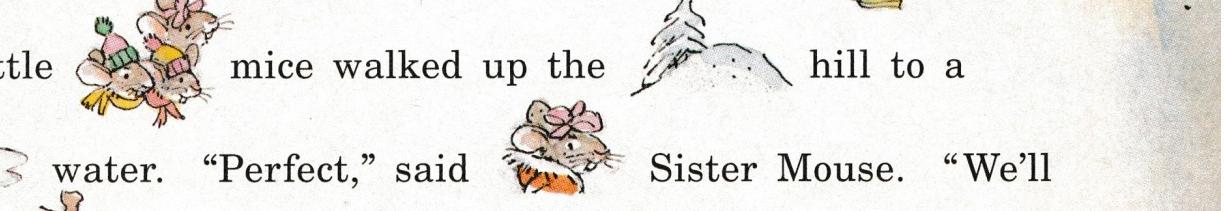
Can you think of a "Creature Nobody Has Ever Seen"? Draw its picture on unlined paper and tell us about it. Include your name, age, and full address (street and number, city or town, state or province, and Zip Code). Mail to **Creatures, HIGHLIGHTS FOR CHILDREN, 803 Church Street, Honesdale, PA 18431**.

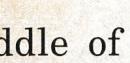
Baby Mouse's Big Idea

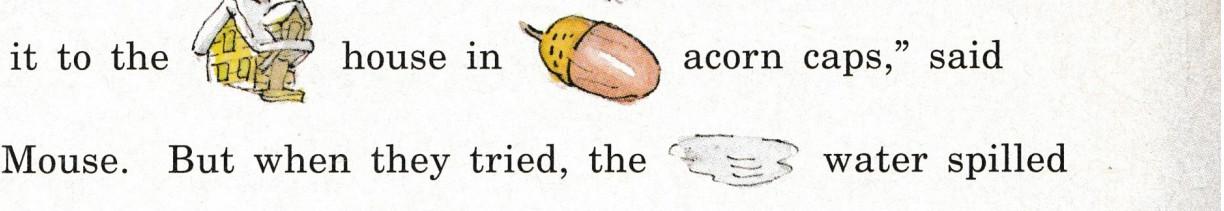
By Jean Kuhn



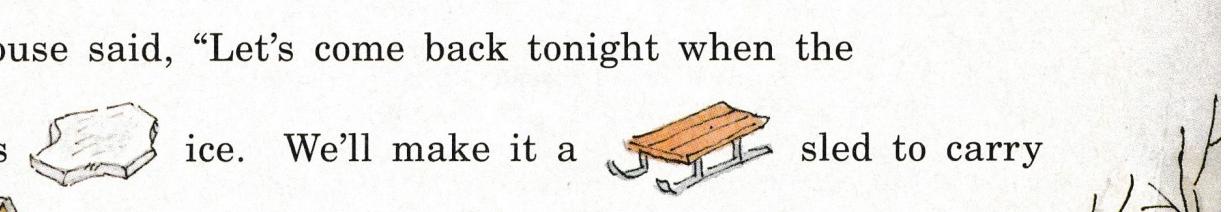
One winter morning, Mama Mouse said, "We're out of  water. Please find some and bring it to the  house."



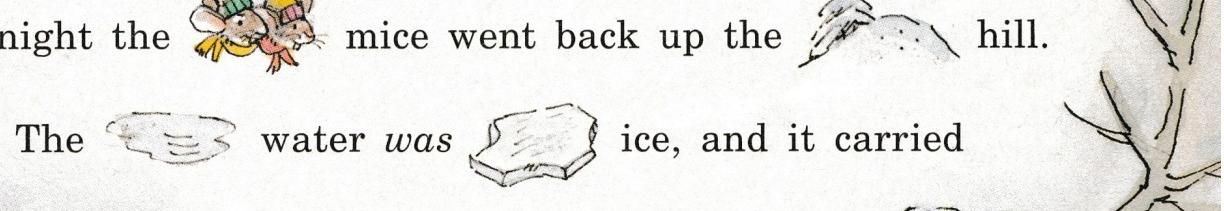
3 Three little  mice walked up the  hill to a puddle of  water. "Perfect," said  Sister Mouse. "We'll carry it to the  house in our  paws." But when they tried, the  water leaked out of their  paws.



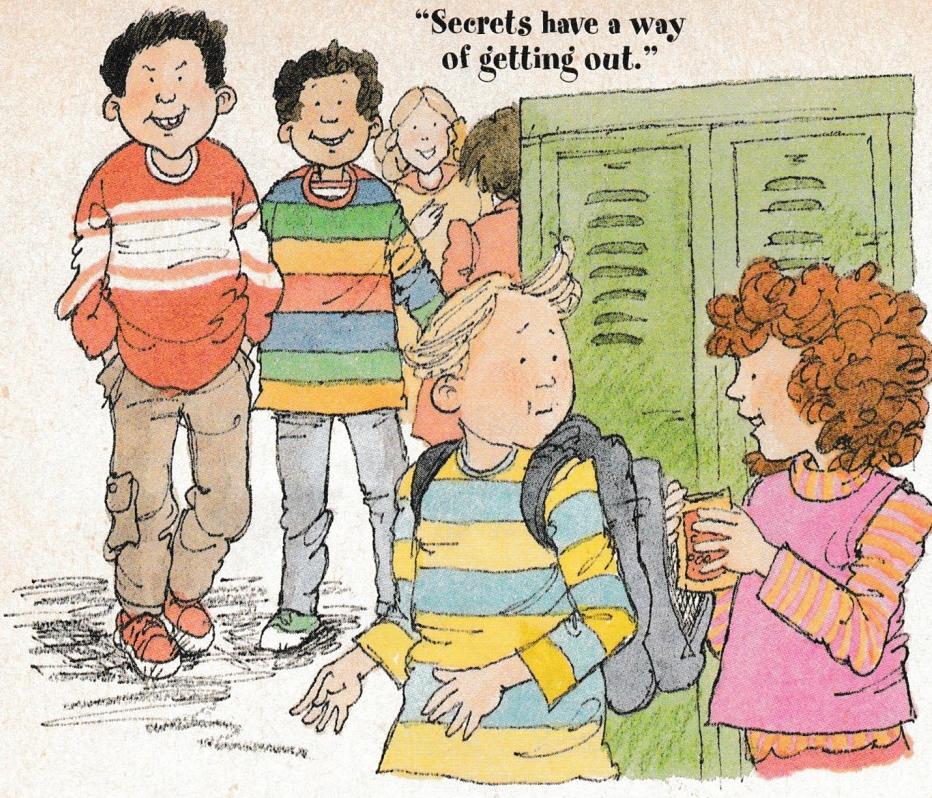
"We'll carry it to the  house in  acorn caps," said Brother Mouse. But when they tried, the  water spilled out of the  acorn caps.



Baby Mouse said, "Let's come back tonight when the  water is  ice. We'll make it a  sled to carry us to the  house."



That night the  mice went back up the  hill. The  water was  ice, and it carried them all the way home.



**"Secrets have a way
of getting out."**

Weirdest of All

By Melanie A. Stinson

If anyone sees, I'll have to leave town." Gordon looked both ways down the school hallway. He hoped his body would hide Zee, who was slipping her special home-baked pumpkin seeds into his backpack. Gordon was planning to invent a new recipe.

"Secrets have a way of getting out," Zee said, bright clothes and red hair flashing like neon.

"The Weirdos," Lion jeered as he and his buddies swaggered up. "Born weird. Dress weird. Act weird."

"Weird, how?" Zee asked. "As in magical? As in wizards and elves? Do you mean mysteriously strange, fantastic, or just plain eerie?"

Zee's good with words, Gordon thought. She uses words to dance around Lion's teasing.

"Weird's what I mean," Lion said, frowning at Zee.

Gordon hunched his shoulders. Weird was exactly how he felt. And if Lion found out his secret, he'd be weirdest of all.

Lion held out his lunch bag. Gordon reluctantly traded with him. If he didn't, Lion would tease him all day, and Gordon couldn't stand that. It was bad enough that Gordon's own brain always kept him worrying about whether his haircut was funny-looking and

whether his clothes looked OK. Embarrassing.

"You bring in great lunches, Gordo," said Lion. "That cheesy bread smothered in spaghetti sauce—*mamma mia!*"

Everyone knew Lion's lunches were the worst. Gordon had once thrown away a pickle-and-peanut-butter sandwich.

Zee nudged Gordon, and he followed her, head down.

"Iwish Lion would stop," Gordon grumbled as he and Zee strolled downtown after school. "I wish he'd eat his own lunches."

"He's not going to," Zee said. She stopped in front of a poster. "Not till we make him understand that it's unacceptable for him to act the way he does toward us." She pointed to the poster, which read COMMUNITY BAKE-OFF.

"Oh no," Gordon said. "No way am I entering that."

"You'd win."

"Maybe. But the teasing would never stop."

Zee looked at him. "Don't you want to be legitimate?"

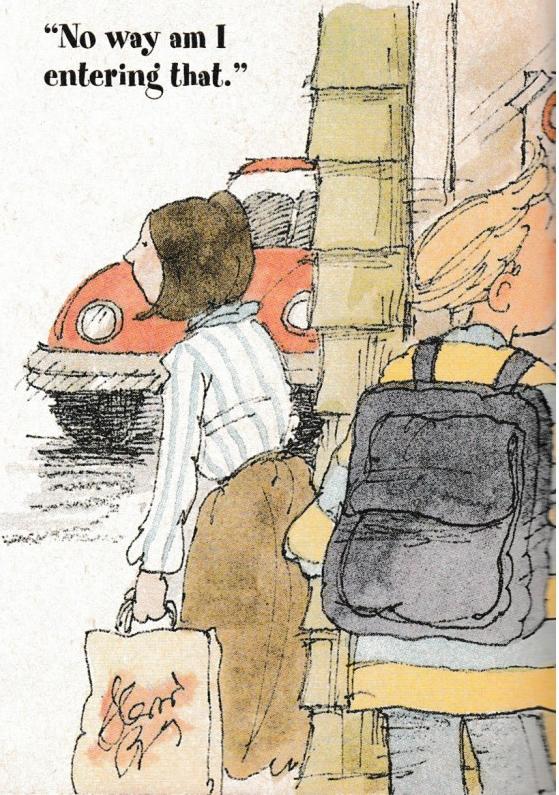
"What's that?"

"Recognized for the talent you are."

Gordon mumbled, "Gotta go," and started walking away. He could hear Zee calling him, but he didn't stop until he reached his kitchen. By then, Gordon realized that he *did* want to enter that contest—to see if he could win and to prove he was—what was that word? *Legitimate*.

Gordon took a deep breath. What if he entered the contest and Lion found out?

**"No way am I
entering that."**



Four days, a dozen egg whites, and a bottle of vanilla extract later, Gordon was famous in his hometown. The newspaper even ran a story about him.

The next day, he'd have to face his classmates. He knew just how he'd do it, too.

"You bake?" Lion scoffed as Gordon entered the classroom armed with a tray. "You bake things, like a girl?" Lion waved the newspaper photo of Gordon in a baker's hat.

"Yes, he bakes," Zee said. "See? 'Grand Prize Winner, Community Bake-Off. Prize: Fifty dollars.'"

Lion laughed harder.

Gordon uncovered his tray of prizewinning cookies.

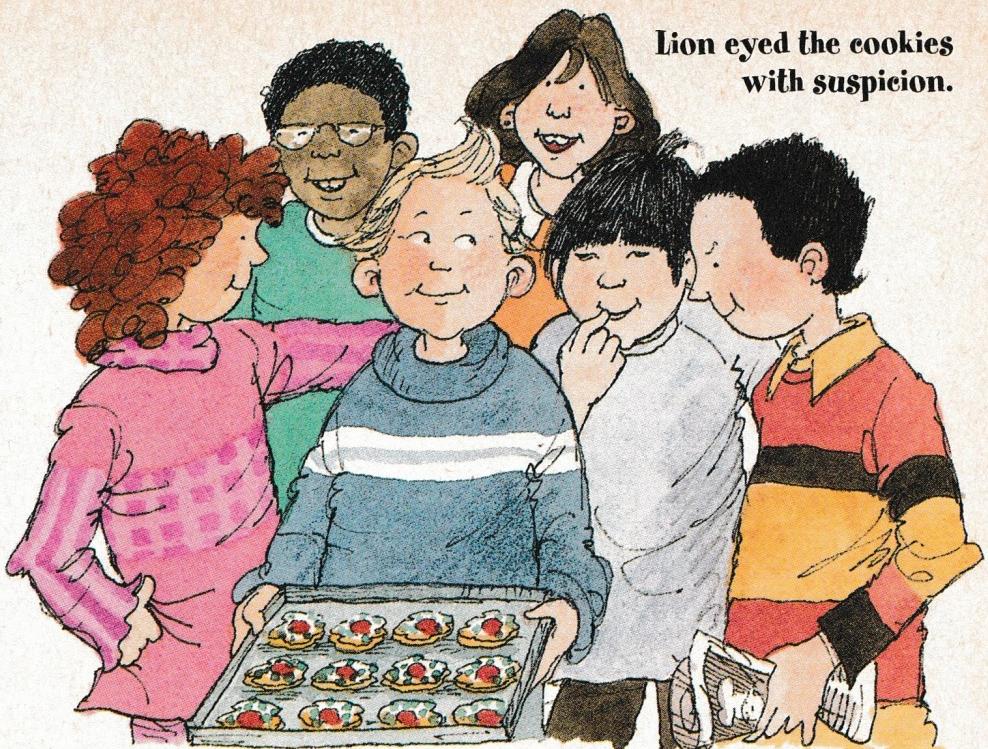
"Gordon's magic recipe," Zee bragged.

Lion eyed the cookies with suspicion. "What's in them?"

"Great bakers never give out their secrets." Zee bit into one. "Mmmm. Still warm."

A crowd gathered around them. Hands reached. Mouths opened. Cookies disappeared.

"I think it's cool that you bake, Gordon," Stephanie said.



Lion eyed the cookies with suspicion.

"Lion, you love his lunches," Zee prompted.

"*Gordo* made those lunches?" Lion said, dumbfounded. His stomach growled. He reached for the last cookie, but Zee snatched and swallowed it in one fluid move.

The whole class laughed. Lion glared.

Gordon removed a cookie from his backpack. "Saved one just for you, Lion. Two dollars."

"Nobody else paid," Lion said.

"Nobody else treats us as bad as you do," Zee scolded. "You want that for free, you treat us like classmates."

"And promise never to bug us again," Gordon added.

"Can't promise."

"No cookie, then," Gordon said.

Lion's stomach rumbled louder.

"Sounds like you're starving," said Zee.

"My mom burned dinner *again* last night, so I skipped it," Lion admitted. "Now you know. Breakfast's as bad as lunch." He sized up the duo. "If that cookie makes me sick, all promises are off."

Gordon handed him the cookie.

Lion wolfed it down. "So it's good. What else do you bake, Gordo—n?"

Zee answered, "Cakes, pies, baked Alaska."

Lion thought for a moment, then said, "My birthday's next week. Could you do the cake?"

"Maybe," Gordon said.

"Chocolate? With pudding and marshmallows?"

"That's doable," said Gordon.

"One problem, though," Zee said. "Cakes made by champion bakers cost money."

"What do you mean?"

"Weirdest-of-all cake," Gordon surprised himself by saying. "It's not free."

"You're a laugh a minute. How much?"

"Ten dollars."

The room grew quiet. Lion licked the icing off his fingers. "Guess my mom would pay that—to support our town's most promising baker."

Gordon grinned. Most promising baker, he thought. Legitimate, at last.



Test your knowledge of Winter Sports

Are you a winter-sports expert? See if you can answer these questions about cold-weather sports.

1. In a downhill ski race, the winner has
- A. the fastest time
 - B. the most turns
 - C. the longest jump
 - D. the sharpest poles

2. In which sport would an athlete perform an axel?
- A. bobsledding
 - B. ski jumping
 - C. luge
 - D. figure skating

3. The Nordic combined ski race includes two types of skiing. What are they?
- A. cross-country and jumping
 - B. downhill and figure
 - C. slalom and jumping
 - D. downhill and cross-country

4. In which winter sport would you see athletes changing lanes?
- A. figure skating
 - B. ski jumping
 - C. speed skating
 - D. bobsledding

5. Ice hockey is played on a
- A. diamond
 - B. rink
 - C. court
 - D. pitch

6. In which race would a skier pass through gates?
- A. Nordic
 - B. obstacle
 - C. slalom
 - D. cross-country

7. The winter sport in which athletes are often called "sliders" is
- A. curling
 - B. luge
 - C. speed skating
 - D. biathlon

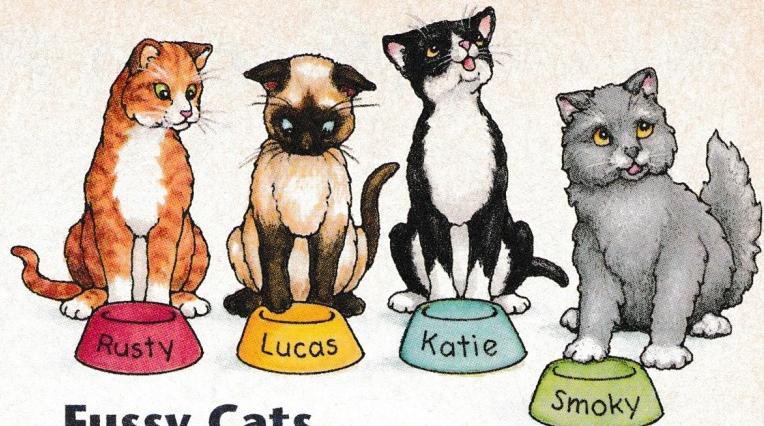
8. The object of ice hockey is to score goals by getting the puck in the other team's net. A goal is worth
- A. one point
 - B. two points
 - C. three points
 - D. fifty dollars

Illustrated by Len Ebert



"How do you keep your room so neat? Mine is always a mess."

"I spend a few minutes every night straightening up. That's usually all it takes."



Fussy Cats

Four cats sat in a row, waiting to be fed. They were each fed a different flavor of cat food: chicken, tuna, beef, or liver.

- Rusty would not eat chicken or beef.
- Lucas would not eat tuna or liver.
- Katie would not eat liver or beef.
- Smoky would eat only chicken.

What did each cat eat?

Answer on page 39.

Nature Watch

From the Roger Tory Peterson Institute

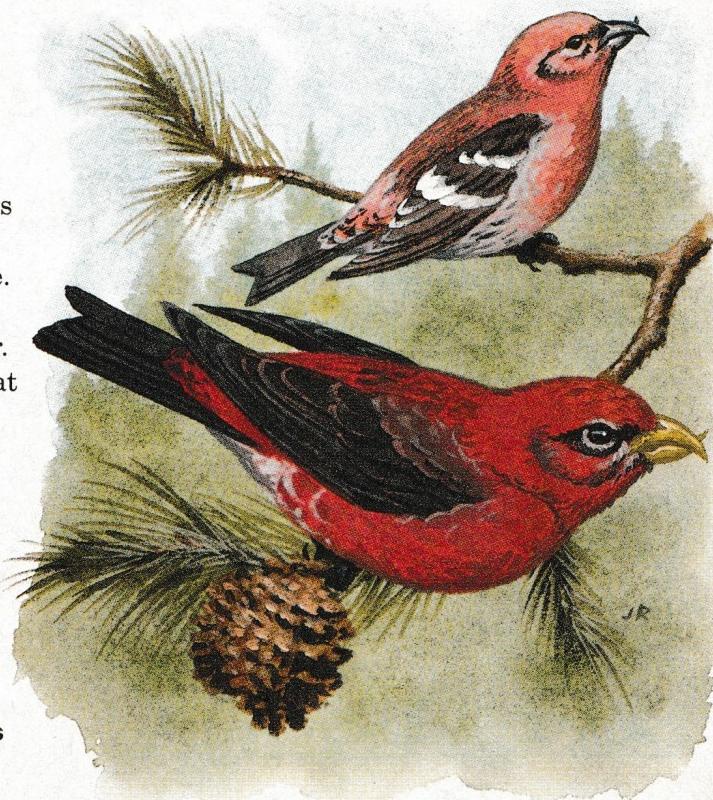
Crossbill

Did You Know? Crossbills have exactly the right name. The tips of their bills really do cross over each other. The birds use their beaks to pry open pinecones and cones of other evergreens. Then they can eat the seeds inside.

In many pine forests, the number of pinecones that grow changes from year to year. To find seeds, flocks of crossbills often fly great distances, especially in winter.

Try This: Pull apart a pinecone or some other kind of evergreen cone. Are your fingers good tools for this work? Would a crossbill's beak work better? Can you think of other animals that might eat the seeds inside?

Crossbills live mainly in Canada and in some northern and western states. They are sometimes seen in the southern states.



Hidden Pictures™

Christmas Carolers

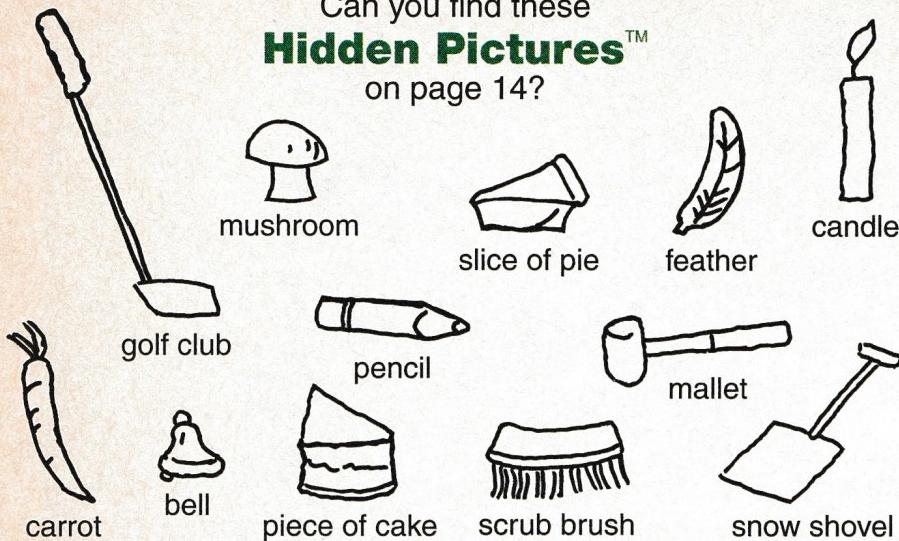
By Charles Jordan



In this big picture find the golf club, candle, mushroom, carrot, bell, feather, scrub brush, mallet, slice of pie, pencil, piece of cake, and snow shovel.

Riddles

Can you find these
Hidden Pictures™
on page 14?



Which are unkind remarks?

- "I got a better grade than you did."
- "My shirt is nicer than yours."
- "Don't sit by him. He's not cool."
- "I had a great time at your party."
- "I don't want her on our team."
- "Let's invite your brother to play with us."
- "You aren't my best friend.
Toby is."
- "Thanks for making my lunch, Dad."

Christmas Is Come

Now Christmas is come,
Let's beat up the drum,
And call all our neighbors together,
And when they appear,
Let us make them such cheer
As will keep out the wind and the weather.

—Washington Irving



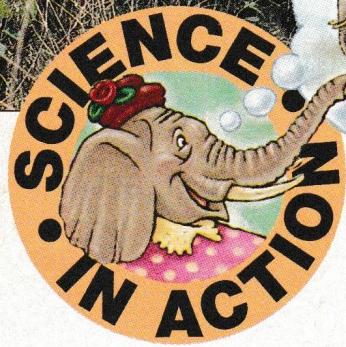
1. Why is lava red hot?
Samantha Agcaoili, California
2. What is the opposite of a hurricane?
Ben Maxson, North Carolina
3. Why did the girl name her pig "Ink"?
Alora Sager, Minnesota
4. Why did the boy run around his bed?
Kevin Good, Virginia
5. What do flowers and bicycles have in common?
Brie Dorney, Wisconsin
6. What's red and goes up and down?
Hersharon Preet Kaur, India
7. What's the difference between a television and a newspaper?
Shane Mull, Ohio
8. What would you get if you stacked thousands of pizza pies on top of one another?
Amanda Meador, Texas
9. Why does Santa Claus have three gardens?
Jacob Newton, New York
10. Why did the orange stop tumbling down the hill?
Estelle Leamon, New Jersey
11. What do you get if you put a sandwich on a go-cart?
Amanda Urbeck, Michigan
12. What do you get when you cross poison ivy and a four-leaf clover?
Zach Harris, Virginia

Answers:

1. Because it was cold and white, it would be good luck.
2. A him-loan. 3. Because it kept running out of its pen. 4. He wanted to catch up with his sleep. 5. Petals (pedals). 6. A tomato in an elevator. 7. Ever try swallowing a fly with a television? 8. A leaning tower of pizza. 9. So he can hoe, hoe, hoe. 10. It ran out of juice. 11. Fast food. 12. A rash of leathery toes.



An elephant grandmother leads her family to a new feeding area.



ELEPHANT GRANDMOTHERS

By Jack Myers, Ph.D., Senior Science Editor

When Dr. Karen McComb came to Amboseli Park in East Africa, her first task was to learn the names of the one hundred or so elephants most often seen.

Scientists working in the park have learned to study elephants

up close by watching them from Land Rovers. They have a catalog of the park's almost one thousand elephants, identified mainly by shapes and markings on their ears and tusks. When the scientists started the catalog, they gave each elephant a number until they discovered that remembering individuals by name is easier than by number. There are estimates of age for all of the elephants and even actual records (like birth certificates) for all born since 1972.

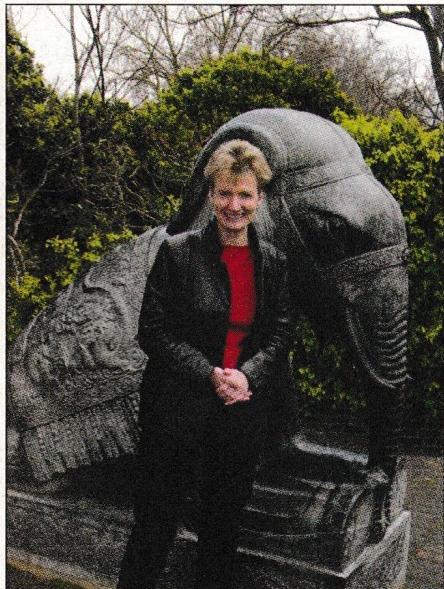
Amboseli was a good place for Dr. McComb to study animal communications, and elephants were a great subject because their lifestyle depends so much on communication.

An Eating Lifestyle

Elephants make their living eating grasses and plant leaves. It takes a lot—about three hundred

pounds a day for a grown-up. That means elephants need to keep moving around to find enough food. And eating takes a lot of time—more than half of each day is spent munching food and looking for more.

Big elephants are rough and tough enough that they don't have to worry about predators like lions. And there are not many diseases that threaten their lives. So elephants are generally long-lived animals. In big parks like Amboseli, where they are protected from human hunters, some live to be more than 70 years old. The real dangers to an elephant come when it is a young calf, especially when it is less than a year old and small enough to walk under its mother's belly. To make possible their continuous search for food and to protect their calves, most elephants live in small family groups.



Dr. Karen McComb

Elephant Families

A typical family group is composed of about six adult females together with their calves, both male and female. When the males get to be about 15 years old, they leave their families and go off to live in all-male groups. The family always has an old, old grandmother, the *matriarch*, who is the acknowledged leader.

The whole group of scientists began a regular routine of spending much of each day driving through the park in Land Rovers, watching the elephants and listening to how they communicate. In searching for food, an elephant often drifts away from the rest of its family. Then it keeps in touch by special "contact calls," just to learn what others in the family are doing.

The scientists saw that an elephant had a characteristic response when it heard a contact call from another member of its family. By holding out its ears, it would show that it was listening, and then might give its own contact call in reply. Elephants have very deep voices, mostly *infrasonic*, with only some of their sound vibrations in the range of human hearing. They can easily

hear one another from more than a mile away.

Strangers or Friends?

There were times when two families came within each other's calling range. How would elephants respond to calls from members of other families?

To find out, the scientists used "playback" experiments. First they used microphones to record the contact calls of 20 different females. Then they watched a chosen family through binoculars while they played back a recorded call from an amplifier on their Land Rover.

In elephant families, everyone listens to Grandma.

Their notes and videotapes showed a wide range of responses. Some families showed a simple listening response. Other families seemed agitated, and nervously bunched together while their calves moved closer into the

bunch. It was easy to see that a family could distinguish between other families by their calls.

Fortunately, the park records of many years showed how often a family had been seen and how often it had been seen with another family. That gave a scale of familiarity—from close friends to total strangers. The calls from a friendly family gave a simple listening response. Calls from strange families were recognized with a nervous bunching response.

Wise Elephants

Dr. McComb and her team had learned a great deal about elephant communication, but they kept on thinking about one puzzling observation. Some families were "smarter," or better at distinguishing calls of friends from those of strangers.

What made some families smarter than others? The scientists searched their records for an explanation. To their surprise there was only one factor of importance: The "smartest" families always had the oldest matriarchs. Evidently a family, as it did in all other activities, waited for some signal from the matriarch before responding to a strange contact call. And older, more experienced matriarchs were better at telling whether other elephants were strangers or friends just by their calls.

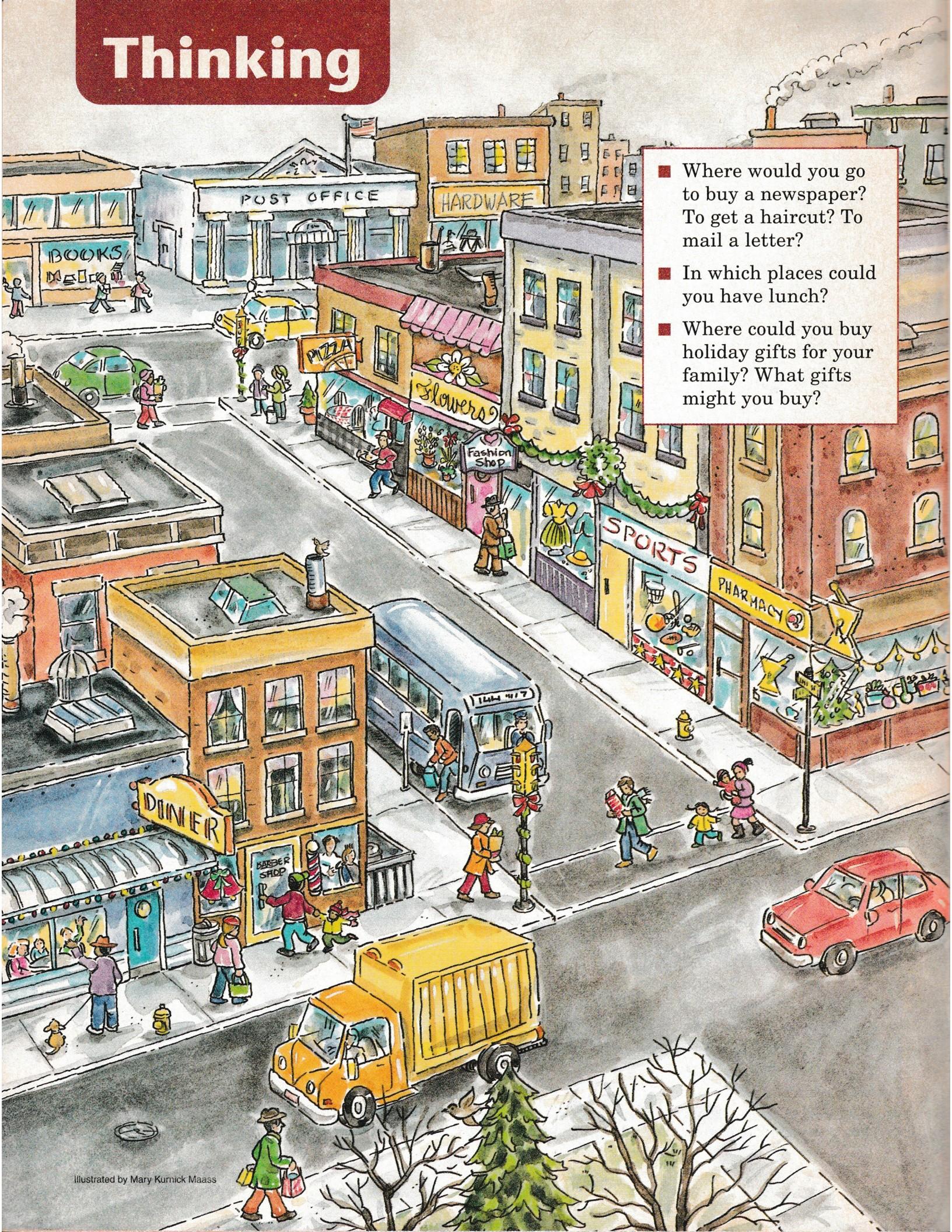
That was an important discovery. It showed how an elephant family depends on the experience carried in the long memory of the matriarch.

Dr. McComb had started out to learn a little more about elephant communication. What she discovered was a much bigger idea about the importance of grandmothers in the lives of elephants.



Amboseli Park in Kenya was a good place for Dr. McComb (on the Land Rover) to study how elephants communicate with one another.

Thinking



- Where would you go to buy a newspaper? To get a haircut? To mail a letter?
- In which places could you have lunch?
- Where could you buy holiday gifts for your family? What gifts might you buy?

Tongue Twisters

Paula picks pink paper.

*Chantelle Silva, Age 6
Ontario*

I'm a teacher that teaches teachers.

*Karli Green, Age 9
Nebraska*

Chris catches cheese in Canada.

*Patrick Cho, Age 9
Ontario*

Trent tries to tow his toy truck.

*Leah Bolton, Age 12
Tennessee*

Curry's candy can't cure colds.

*Curry Deak, Age 8
West Virginia*

Send the best tongue twister you've ever heard (or one that you've made up) to **Twisters**, HIGHLIGHTS FOR CHILDREN, 803 Church Street, Honesdale, PA 18431. Please include your name, age, and complete address.

The Feast of Lights

Kindle the taper like the steadfast star
Ablaze of evening's fire o'er the earth,
And add each night a lustre till afar
An eightfold splendor shine upon thy hearth.

—Emma Lazarus



Matching

Look at each present on the left. Find one like it on the right.





The Man Who Painted Truth

By Kathleen M. Hays

Oscar Howe sat quietly at his drawing table, concentrating on a piece of blank paper. He was looking for what his Dakota Sioux ancestors called "points of beauty" (see "The Painting of the Truth" on page 21). After a while, he picked up his pencil and began to connect the imaginary points with delicate lines. Gradually the picture in his mind appeared in the maze of lines on the paper.

Although points of beauty were an important part of an ancient Dakota ceremony, Howe's paintings looked modern. Too modern, many people thought. All of his life he struggled to convince others that his paintings could be both modern and true to his heritage.

Lines of Magic and Beauty

Oscar Howe was born on South Dakota's Crow Creek Reservation



Sunflower Figure, 1970

in 1915. Starting at age three, he began to draw lines on paper. "Each line had a fascination for me," he said. "I thought of magic and beauty."

Oscar's parents did not understand his lines. The lines were abstract and did not seem to represent familiar objects like people and animals.

His parents took away his pencil and paper, so Howe began to draw with charcoal. When they forbade him to draw with charcoal, he drew on the ground outside. Though he was very young, Howe had already begun to develop his own artistic vision and style.

Studio Style

Howe attended high school in New Mexico, where he won a place in the Santa Fe Indian School's painting program. The program, which became world famous as the Studio, was run by Dorothy Dunn. Dunn encouraged Howe and the other students to paint subjects from their tribal backgrounds. She taught everyone to draw with firm outlines and little or no shading, to keep background details to a minimum, and to use natural colors. The style Dunn taught became the style all Native American painters were expected to use.

Finding His Own Truth

Early in his career, Howe painted in the Studio style. He painted pictures of Sioux boys on horseback, buffalo hunts, and deer bounding across the prairie. But as he became more confident, his work began to change.

He experimented with the traditional "point-and-line" technique of Dakota painters. Designs were created from point to point. Curved or straight lines connected each point. The pictures that emerged were filled with geometric shapes and bursting with color and emotion. They were not at all like the pictures he had learned to paint at the Studio.

Critics complained that his new style looked too modern to be Native American. Howe disagreed. "I have taken the straight line out of the Dakota past and used it as a part of my art," he said. "Its meaning remains the same—the truth." In Dakota pictographs and sign language, a straight line stood for truth. Howe had begun to paint his own truth.

Howe returned to the reservation often to talk to the old people. "I heard the truth from them and responded by painting them in like manner of their words," he said. But his work continued to draw criticism. In 1958, he submitted a painting to a Native American art competition. The painting was rejected. The judges did not think it fit the rules for Native American art.

Howe wrote a letter of protest to the museum: "Are we to be held back forever . . . with no right for individualism, dictated to as the Indian has always been . . . ?"

"Are we to be held back forever . . . dictated to as the Indian has always been?"

His words made museum directors, art critics, and teachers all over the world stop and think. Shouldn't Native American artists be treated like other artists, free to paint as they wished?

Changing Native American Art

The next year, the museum changed its rules to allow different styles of painting for their competition. Howe was awarded the grand prize. In his independent way, he had won a battle as dramatic as any fought by his Dakota ancestors.

"In art I have realized a part of a dream," Howe once said. "To present a true image of the Dakota Indian as I understood him and his culture." By the time of his death in 1983, Oscar Howe's efforts to paint his vision of the truth had forever changed Native American art.

The Painting of the Truth

Oscar Howe's way of painting draws on a traditional Dakota ceremony called "the painting of the truth." During the ceremony, an artist, a relater, and witnesses work together to document an important event.

For three days before the ceremony, the artist studies the painting area to choose points of beauty. During the ceremony, the relater describes the event. The artist draws and paints what the relater has described.

In traditional Dakota art, pictures begin with points of beauty. The artist creates a design by connecting these points with straight or curved lines. Straight lines represent truth, and curved lines symbolize unity, movement, and the open sky.

Howe used this method in his art to express the lifeway of his people.



Creation of Weotanica, 1925

A Dress for the Moon

By Indira Krishnan

Once upon a time a young man named Madan lived in a village in northern India. Madan's father wanted him to become a farmer. But Madan wished to leave the village and find work in town.

He promised his father that he would send a part of his earnings home regularly. His father blessed him and wished him a safe trip.

In town, Madan learned to be a tailor. He worked hard and soon became known for the fine clothes he made. The entire town wanted clothes sewed by Madan. The more his fame spread, the more proud and boastful Madan became.

One night Madan sat gazing at the full moon that shone from behind a tall coconut tree. He said, "I am sure I can make a dress for the moon. The moon will praise my handiwork, and then my fame will spread to the sun and stars."

A breeze carried his words to the coconut tree. Laughing softly, the tree bent down and whispered, "That's one thing you can't do."

"Tell the moon
I want to
make a dress
for her."



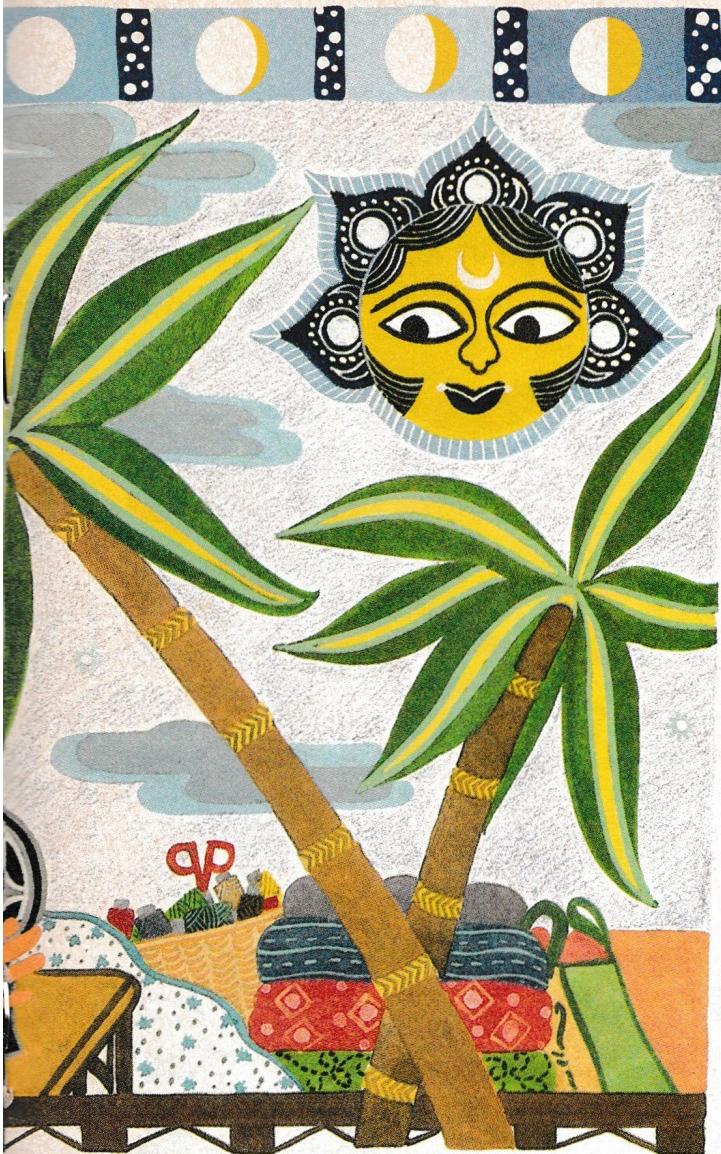
Madan frowned. "How do you know what I can do?" he said. "You are only a tree."

The coconut tree tried to say something more, but Madan would not listen.

"If you want to be of some use, tell the moon that I want to make a dress for her. You are tall enough to do that," he said.

So the tree told the moon about Madan. The moon agreed to have a dress made by the famous tailor from Earth.

Madan jumped for joy. Quickly



he began to sew a dress of smooth white satin for the moon. When it was done, he called out to the coconut tree, "You must give this dress to the moon, as I cannot reach her." The coconut tree agreed.

The following evening, as Madan waited eagerly for the moon to appear, the coconut tree bent down and whispered, "The moon says your dress doesn't fit. It's too loose."

Madan was stunned. "It can't be!" he cried. "The clothes I make always fit perfectly." But the moon returned the dress to him, and he

had to redo it. He spent the night making the dress a little smaller and gave it back to the tree.

The next evening the moon rose a little later. Madan waited impatiently. But again the coconut tree bent down and whispered, "The dress is still too loose."

Madan nearly wept with disappointment. "I can't believe it! How could I go wrong?" he wailed.

"I tried to tell you before," said the tree. "After the moon is full, she grows smaller each day until you can't see her at all. I have been noticing this for many years. So how can you make one dress that would fit the moon properly? But you wouldn't listen to me."

Brokenhearted, Madan sat with his head in his hands the whole night.

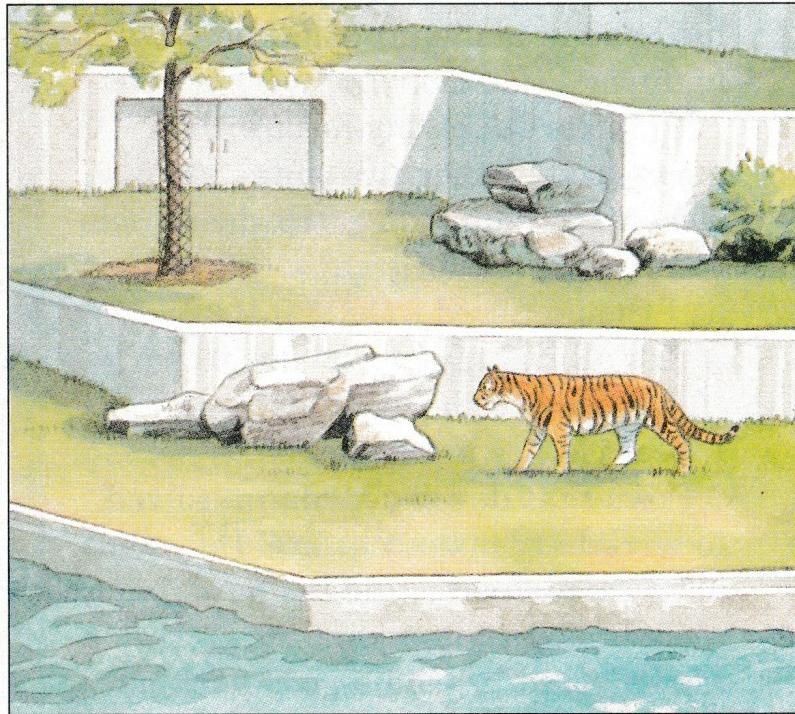
At the break of day he saw the moon on the other side of the sky. He whispered, "I am sorry, dear Moon. I am not as great a tailor as I thought."

"It's all right," said the moon. "After all, I'm the moon. How can I wear clothes as people do?"

From that day on, Madan resolved to work harder than before. He was not vain anymore, and his hard work brought him more money. He remembered to send a good part of it to his father. People liked him better because he was an excellent tailor and a humble one, too.

For Wee Folks

- How does the wild tiger know when to eat?
How does the tiger in the zoo know?



- Which tiger has an easier life? Which one is more free?

- Which live on land? Which live in water? Which spend time on land and in water?



Science Corner



Taking Up Space

Find out how much space an apple takes up. Fill a container partway with water. Use tape to mark the water level. Place an apple under

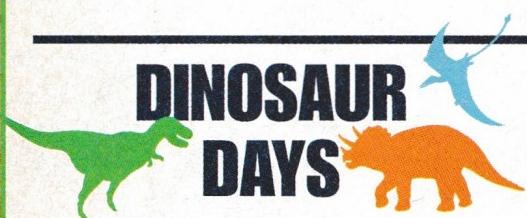
the water so that (as much as possible) your fingers are not underwater. Use tape to mark this new water level, then remove the apple. The space between the two marks is equal to the *volume* of the apple. Use a measuring cup to fill the container to the upper mark. How many ounces of space does the apple take up? (Hint: One cup equals eight ounces.)



I wonder . . .
why the sea
is salty.

There is a little salt in fresh water, even the water people drink. So rivers are always adding a little salt into the sea. The sea is always losing water that goes up into the air, but the sea keeps the salt. Over many years, the sea has gathered lots of salt.

DINOSAUR DAYS



Are there any animals living now that lived when dinosaurs were living?

*Jacob Cordoba, Age 7
Georgia*

There are many animals alive today that are closely related to those that lived in dinosaur times, such as cockroaches, crocodiles, and sharks.

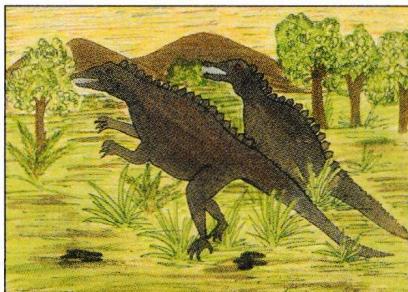
How did Spinosaurus carry the heavy load on its back without a struggle? I'd think all those spikes would get heavy!

*Philip Glowka, Age 9
Pennsylvania*

You are right that spikes and spines could have been heavy.

Write to "Dino Don" Lessem

Do you have a dinosaur drawing, joke, question, or other contribution for Dino Don? Include your name, age, and complete address, and mail to **Dino Don, HIGHLIGHTS FOR CHILDREN, 803 Church Street, Honesdale, PA 18431.**

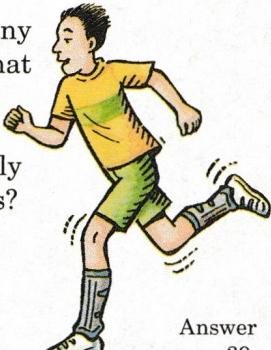


Morning Walk Time
*Harsimran Kaur, Age 9
India*

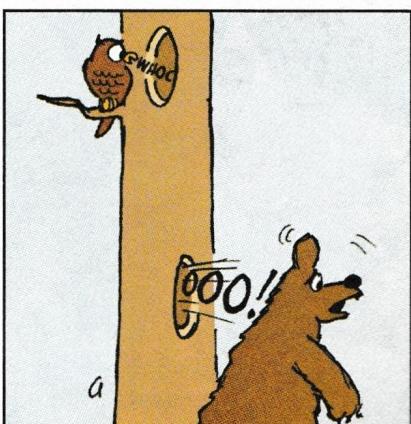
But most animals have a network of tendons and muscles to support these kinds of structures on their bodies. Also, the bone that made up these spines could have been hollow and spongy and therefore light in weight.

Exercising the Heart

Why do many exercises that are good for the heart mainly use the legs?



*Answer
on page 39.*



Cookie Science

By Anne Marie Pace

Why are some chocolate-chip cookies crispy and thin while others are chewy and moist?

The answer is a matter of science.

If you've ever made chocolate-chip cookies, you may remember what goes into them. Most recipes have similar ingredients: flour, a fat such as butter or margarine, eggs, brown sugar, white sugar, baking soda or baking powder to make the cookies rise . . . and chocolate chips, of course.

How these ingredients interact with one another in a hot oven is what makes a cookie.

Baking is all about chemical reactions.

A minor tweak to the ingredients or to the method you use can make a major change in a cookie.

Let's look at an ingredient that can make a big difference—the fat. Most recipes give you a choice of using butter or margarine. Either fat will work, but your choice affects what kind of cookie you'll get.

Butter melts at a lower temperature than margarine. In a hot oven, a lot of the butter melts before the shape of the cookie has a chance to set. Cookie dough made with butter spreads out on the baking sheet. If you use butter in your cookie dough, you'll get a thin, crisp cookie.

The same recipe made with margarine won't spread as far because the margarine melts more slowly. The cookie has a chance to set before much of the margarine melts. You'll get a thicker, chewier cookie.

Some people use shortening in chocolate-chip cookies. Shortening is another fat that doesn't melt as quickly as butter. Like margarine, it makes a chewy cookie. But unlike margarine, it adds no flavor.

And watch out for so-called

How a cookie crumbles . . . depends on chemistry.

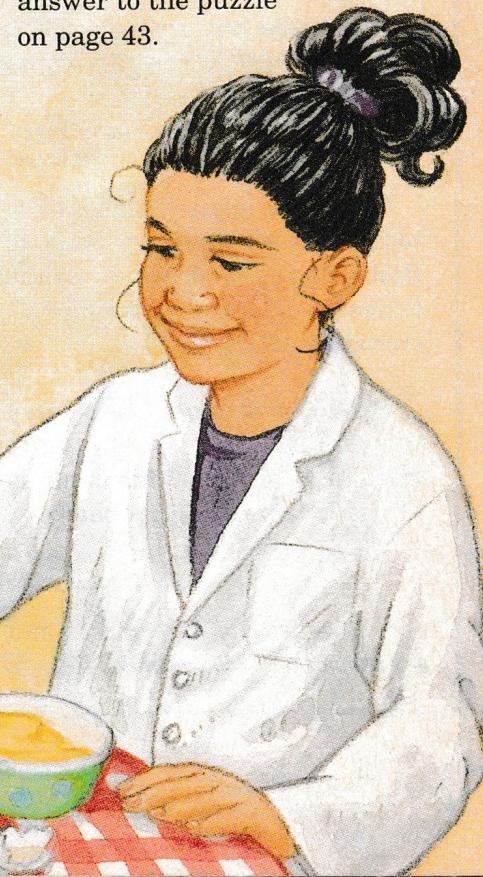
"spreads." These margarine-like products are designed to be spread on toast, not to be used for baking. They melt quickly because they can be almost half liquid. They'll make your cookie dough spread across the entire pan.

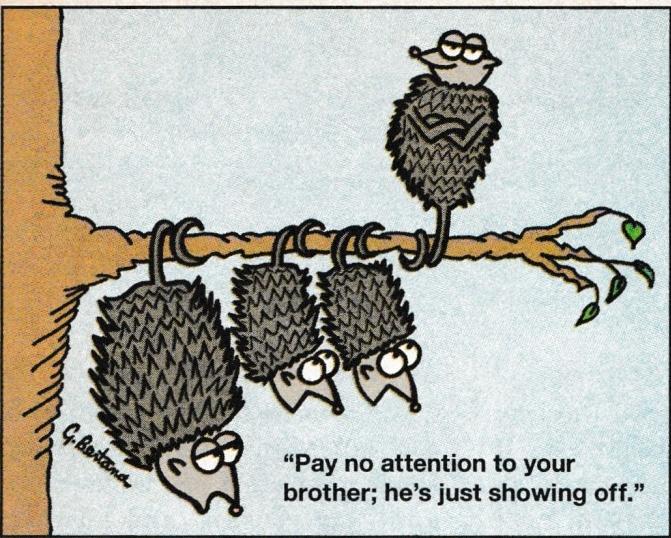
Many bakers love to experiment. They try melting the butter before mixing it into the batter. They add extra vanilla. They try using whole eggs, then just egg whites. The possibilities seem endless. In fact, bakers are almost like scientists, working to create the ultimate cookie.

Whether you like chewy or crunchy chocolate-chip cookies, understanding the science of baking will help you make a cookie that's perfect for you.

For a cookie recipe, check your answer to the puzzle on page 43.

Illustrated by
Anni Matsick





Information, Please

In each pair, which statement gives more precise information?

Grandma arrived at lunchtime.

Grandma arrived at 12:07 P.M.

The temperature dropped to four degrees last night.
It was very cold last night.

Jeffrey is very tall for his age.

Jeffrey is five feet, seven inches tall.

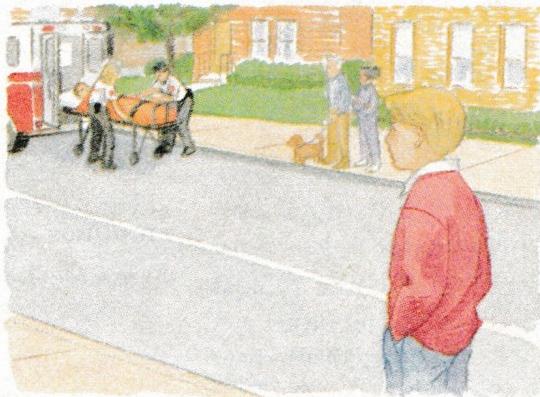
I earn 10 dollars each week doing chores for our neighbor.

Our neighbor pays me well for doing chores each week.

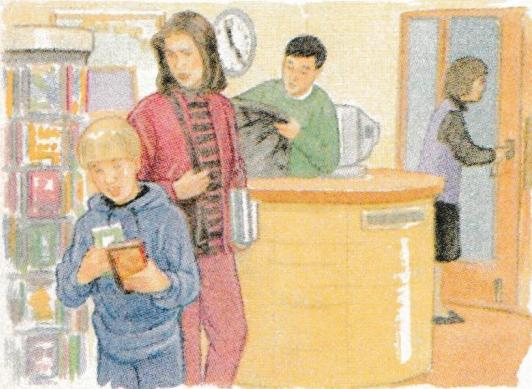
Goofus and Gallant®



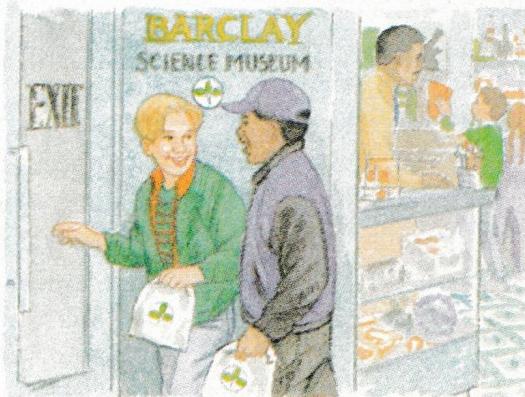
"Hey, mister! How did that fire get started?"



Gallant stays back so emergency workers can do their jobs.



"Why do we have to leave already?
They're open until five o'clock."



Gallant doesn't wait until the last minute to make his purchase.

Holiday Traditions

In our June 2003 issue, we asked you to tell us about your favorite holiday traditions. Thanks for sharing your stories with us! We wish we could publish them all. Here are just a few.

Fun at the Lake

My favorite holiday tradition is the Fourth of July party that we have every year. We live at a lake, and every year we watch the fireworks show that happens in front of our house. We also have a Slip 'n Slide for fun, even for the grown-ups!

Alex Sapp, Age 10
Georgia



Celebrating Family Day

Every Thursday we have "family day," and I like it best when we eat out on that day.

Matthew Ropiejko, Age 6
Poland

Backwards Day

Every year on April 1 we have Backwards Day. For instance, we have spaghetti for breakfast, bagels for lunch, and crackers and cheese for dinner. We have recess before school (because we are homeschooled), and we say our prayers and get ready to in the morning instead of at night.

Katie and Tania Parsons, Age 9
Michigan



Don't Get Pinched!

Every Saint Patrick's Day, my whole family has to wear green. If someone does not, then everyone gets to pinch that person! Last year, my grandpa forgot to wear green! He finally found some on his pager, so we didn't pinch him.

Therese Hockel, Age 11
California

Follow the Clues

Every Easter, my Nanny gives my brother and me a small Easter egg with a clue in it. We follow clue after clue until we come to a prize. This is my favorite holiday tradition.

Jed Peacock, Age 10
New Mexico

Bowl in the New Year

For New Year's, our family has a light dinner, then we go bowling for more than two hours! When we come home, we have bratwurst and play board games till midnight! It is a really fun tradition.

Elizabeth and Teresa Beatty
Ages 11 and 10
Indiana

Dancing Dragons

My favorite holiday tradition is Chinese New Year. I like it because my family goes to a Chinese temple in Los Angeles. It is very beautiful and amazing. We get to see Chinese dragons dance on the streets.

Ada Ng, Age 7
California

Water-Balloon Toss

My favorite holiday tradition is our Halloween water-balloon toss. When my mother, my brother, my aunt, my cousins, and I finish trick-or-treating, we change out of our costumes, fill balloons with water, run outside, and toss them to one another.

Raul Mendoza, Age 9
Texas

Find the Afikomen

My favorite holiday tradition is finding the afikomen (covered matzo) on Passover. The oldest person at the seder (dinner) hides it. One time, my grampa hid it under the video player!

Taylor Broening, Age 8
New Jersey

Peanuts at Christmas

On the night before Christmas, we go around our town and look at the Christmas decorations on all the houses. While we look at the lights, we eat hot boiled peanuts. When we get home, we read *The Polar Express* and the Christmas story.

Cody Waters, Age 12
Georgia



La Fête des Rois

In January, there is a celebration. It is from France. It's called La Fête des Rois, which means "the party of the kings." It celebrates when the three kings came to see Jesus. We celebrate it because I'm half-French and half-American. We have a cake with a bean in it. Whoever gets the bean in their slice gets to watch TV all they want.

*Claire Fouchereaux, Age 7
Maine*



Decorating the Cross

At our church on Easter, we put a bunch of flowers on a cross out by the road. It turns out very colorful and very beautiful! I love getting my picture taken in front of it. That is my favorite holiday tradition.

*Katie Simmons, Age 13
Virginia*

Bagels in Bed

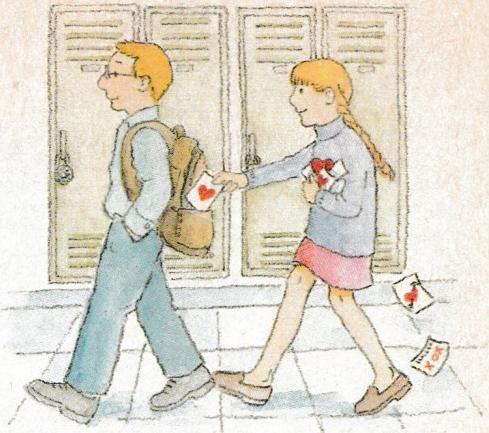
Every Mother's Day, my dad, my brother, my sister, and I bike to the bagel store, which is just a few miles from our house. We bring bagels back and give them to our mom for "Bagels in Bed." We do this rain or shine. This year, it was pouring rain the entire time—good thing we had raincoats!

*Clara Stuligross, Age 11
Pennsylvania*

Sharing Thanksgiving

My favorite holiday tradition is on Thanksgiving. My family and I take a Thanksgiving dinner to children who have cancer and are in the hospital. Since they aren't home on Thanksgiving, they are thankful that we do that.

*Aubrey Cooley, Age 8
Missouri*



Colorful Water Fun

In India, we have a holiday called Holi. We call our friends, get together, and throw water with paint mixed in it at each other. It is very fun. I love Holi!

*Medha Chandorkar, Age 10
South Carolina*

Magical Hanukkah Cake

I like our Hanukkah party. You get to play dreidel, tell the story of Hanukkah, eat latkes, and, best of all, my mom makes a Hanukkah cake. She does a special magic trick to the cake. She secretly fills it with Hanukkah gelt! Everyone wonders how she does it.

*Matthew Mason, Age 9
Connecticut*

Fun with Friends

My dad is deaf. So every year, a whole bunch of deaf people join together in a big party. They do this for every holiday. I get to see one of my best friends, Marytina, and we always have lots of fun!

*Joy Finneran, Age 10
Vermont*

Come Back, Spring!

On the first day of spring, my family walks around the pool and says, "Go away, Winter; come back, Spring." I think it is fun to do it. Last year we did it at night.

*Carrie Lancaster, Age 8
South Carolina*

You're the Movie Director!

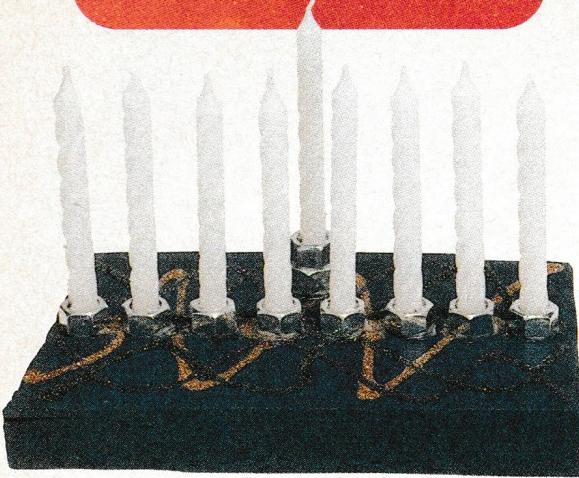
What kind of movie would you like to make? We want to know! On unlined paper, draw a scene from your movie. In fewer than one hundred words, tell us what the movie is about. Be sure the movie idea is your very own creation. Send your work to

Movies
HIGHLIGHTS FOR CHILDREN
803 Church Street
Honesdale, PA 18431



We'll publish as many responses as we can. Your work must reach us by January 1, 2004, to be considered for publication. Please include your name, age, and complete address.

You Can Make It!



Make a Hanukkiya— a Hanukkah menorah

By Janice M. Yuwiler

1. Find a piece of board that is less than a foot long. Paint the top and sides with two coats of paint. Let it dry.
2. Collect 10 hex nuts (3/8-inch size) for candleholders.
3. Glue two hex nuts together to make a tall candleholder for the *shamash*. Let it dry.
4. Glue the rest of the hex nuts in a single line or an arc on the board. Glue the *shamash* holder in the center behind the line or arc. Let the glue dry.
5. Decorate the board with glitter or paint.

*Have an adult check that the *shamash* holder is in a safe spot. You must be able to replace the *shamash* in its holder without getting burned when the other candles are lit.*

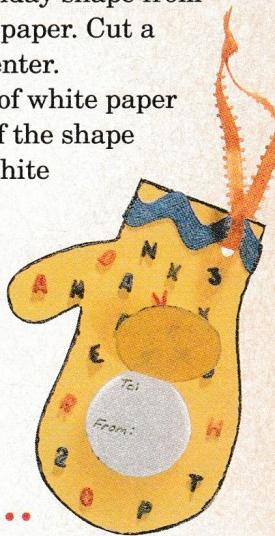
Find lots
of holiday crafts on
HighlightsKids.com.



This gift's for you

By Marie E. Cecchini

1. Cut out a holiday shape from construction paper. Cut a flap in the center.
2. Glue a piece of white paper to the back of the shape so that the white paper shows through the window.
3. Decorate the shape, then punch a hole at the top. Use ribbon to turn it into a gift tag.
4. Open the flap and write a message on the white paper.

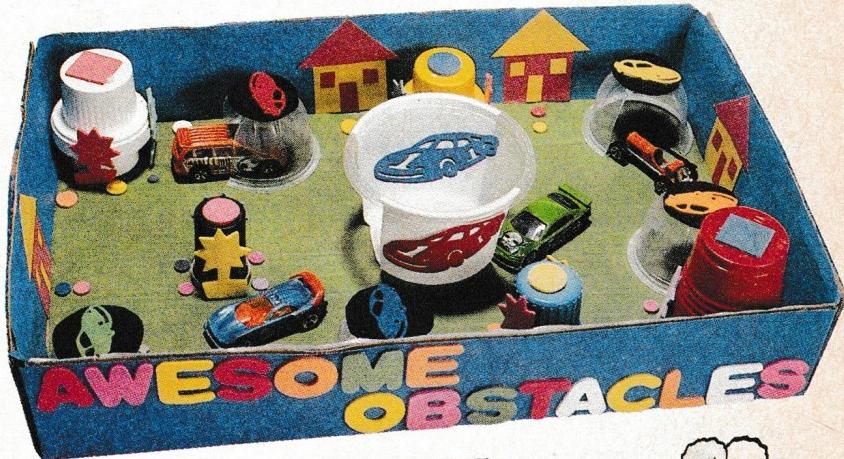


Craft an awesome obstacle course

By Susan Shadle Erb

1. Glue construction paper or craft foam to the inside bottom and sides of a shallow sturdy box.
2. Select several plastic containers and lids to use as bumpers and garages for toy cars.
3. With an adult's help, cut openings in the garages.
4. Place the bumpers and garages inside the box lid. Make sure the paths between them are wide enough for toy cars to pass through.
5. Glue the bumpers and garages in place, then decorate them. Let the glue dry completely.

To play: Place one car on the board for each garage. Hold the game board in both hands and rock it back and forth. See how many cars you can park in separate garages at one time. Or use one car and see if you can park it in each garage.



Celebrate with Christmas elves

By Robin M. Adams

1. Break a craft stick in half. Trim the rough edge.
2. Twist green and red chenille sticks together to make a striped chenille stick. Cut it in half.
3. Lay the striped chenille-stick halves together on top of one craft-stick half (see diagram 1).
4. Hold the striped chenille sticks firmly in place. Wrap a green chenille stick evenly around the craft stick until the stick is half-covered (see diagram 2).



Diagram 1



Diagram 2

5. Fold out the tops of the striped chenille sticks to make arms, and wrap the craft stick a few more times. Leave part of the craft stick showing (for the head). Glue on wiggle eyes.
6. Separate the bottoms of the striped chenille sticks to make legs, and bend the ends for feet.
7. Twist a small piece of red or green chenille stick around the head



for a hat and another at the neck for a scarf. Glue a tiny red pompom atop the hat. Let it dry. Make several Christmas elves.

Craft Challenge!

Using string and paint, design your own wrapping paper.

Warm a friend's heart

By Randi Lynn Mrvos

1. From construction paper, cut out two mug shapes that are a little larger than a packet of hot chocolate.
2. Cut out designs from wrapping paper, and glue them onto the front of one of the mug shapes.
3. Glue the edges of the mug shapes together, leaving the top unglued. After the glue dries, insert a packet of hot-chocolate mix, and give the mug to a friend.



The Bear Family

By Marianne Mitchell



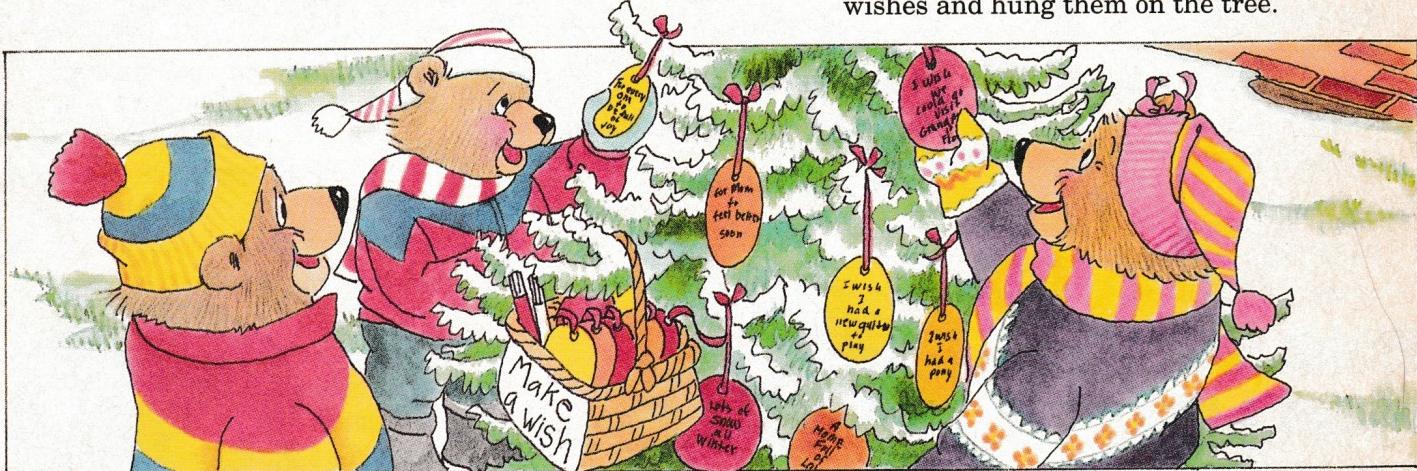
Poozy: Why are there circles all over this tree?

Woozy: It's a Wish Tree.



Piddly: I helped Woozy make it. I put out paper circles, markers, and ribbon.

Woozy: Neighbors passing by wrote down their wishes and hung them on the tree.



Poozy: That's a lot of wishes!

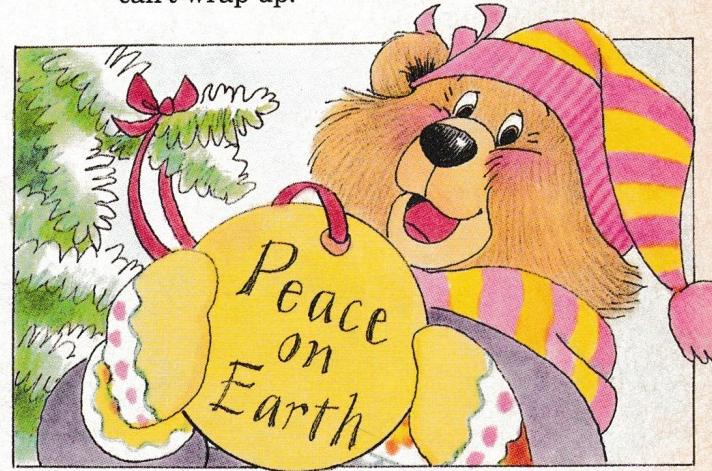
Piddly: Did anyone wish for presents?

Woozy: Some did. But most wished for things you can't wrap up.



Dad: Here's a wish for someone to get well.

Mom: And this one is for a safe trip home.



Woozy: This wish is for everyone!

Jokes

Which Rhyme?

In each group,
which words rhyme?

lord
word
sword

rough
tough
through

cool
school
pool

rain
rein
reign

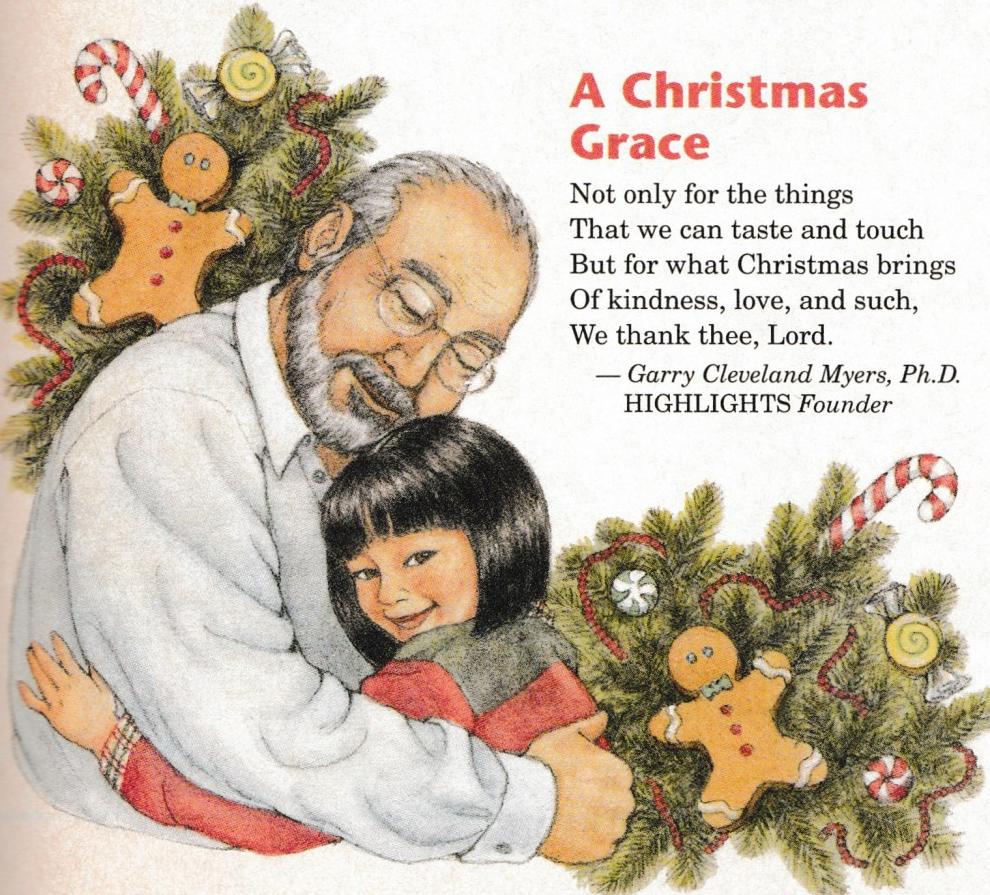
dog
log
hog



A Christmas Grace

Not only for the things
That we can taste and touch
But for what Christmas brings
Of kindness, love, and such,
We thank thee, Lord.

—Garry Cleveland Myers, Ph.D.
HIGHLIGHTS Founder



Two bats are in a bat house.
One goes out to get some food. He
comes back with a huge bump on
his head.

First bat: "What happened?"

Second bat: "You see that tree
over there?"

First bat: "Yes."

Second bat: "Well, I didn't."

Chelsea Case, California

A book never written:

Let's Go Home! by Dewey Havta

Traci Omer, Nevada

Mozart: "I can unlock any door in
the musical world with my
piano."

Beethoven: "How's that?"

Mozart: "Why, I have eighty-
eight keys!"

Vivian Erwin, New Jersey

Knock, knock.

Who's there?

Seaweed.

Seaweed who?

Seaweed come in if you'd open the
door.

Dylan Liu, Minnesota

Teacher: "Steve, can you tell me
the difference between elec-
tricity and lightning?"

Steve: "Yes. Lightning is free and
electricity isn't."

Christine Kim, California

Student: "Would you punish me
for something I didn't do?"

Teacher: "Of course not."

Student: "Good, because I didn't
do my homework."

Shamial Ahmad, Pennsylvania

Send the funniest joke or the best riddle you've
ever heard, with your name, age, and full address
(street and number, city or town, state or province,
and Zip Code), to

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Our Own Pages



The Sea Horse
Micah Atkinson, Age 7
Tennessee

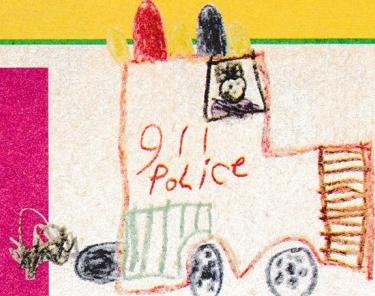
Hanukkah

"Come help light the candles,"
Calls your ma,
For tonight is the first night
Of Hanukkah.
You strike the match;
It goes ablaze.
You say the prayer as you get ready
For these holy eight days.
Think of beautiful things,
Like white doves and pheasants.
Then comes your favorite part:
Opening presents!

Annie Arrighi-Allisan, Age 10
Massachusetts



The City at Christmas
Raven Nadja, Age 4
New York



Brett Strube, Age 6
Arizona

Teeth

It is loose
It is wiggly
It will fall out soon
It is under my pillow
It is gone
It is a dollar

Elizabeth Stensrud, Age 7
Washington

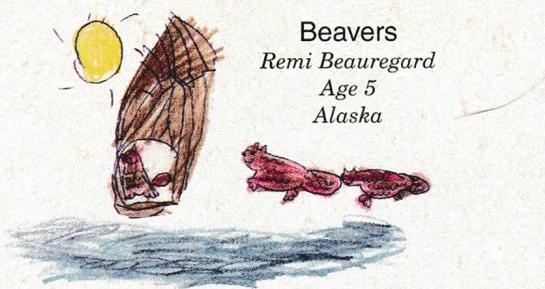


Bald Eagle
Jamie Idso, Age 11
Minnesota

The Peacemaker

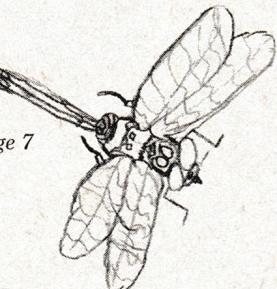
The sunshine befriends me
As it shows its face
To the earth below it.

Nathan Turner, Age 11
Kentucky



Beavers
Remi Beauregard
Age 5
Alaska

Dragonfly
Dan Platonov, Age 7
Michigan



Clouds

First it's a fish,
then a dog.
Now it's a cowboy;
now it's a log.
Clouds—
they are fun to watch.
Now it's a stereo—
turn it up one notch.
Looking out my window
upside down,
now it's a king and queen;
look at that shining crown.
Now it's a football player;
now it's a bird.
Now it's a trumpet player—
I wish you could have heard!

Ruth Hale, Age 8
Idaho

S & S (Stars and Space)

On my way to the planets
We flew past Mars,
Then the asteroid belt.
We soon saw many stars.

We flew past Jupiter,
Then past Saturn.
Soon we found out
Its rings made a pattern.

We flew past Neptune.
Soon I started to sleep.
Then we passed Pluto.
We barely made a peep.

On our way back home,
Again past Mars,
I landed on Earth
And saw our great Star.

One starry night
I looked up high,
And thought of my adventure
Through that wonderful sky.

Kyle Riedley, Age 9
Kentucky



Nick Clayton, Age 12
Iowa

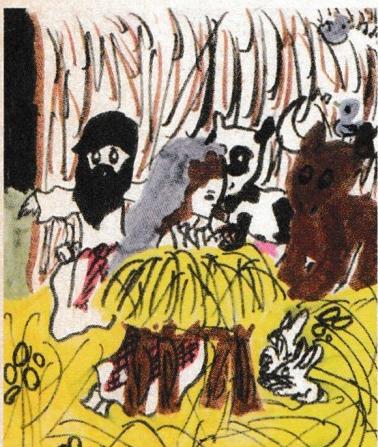
The Lemon

The lemon is a strong fruit,
bitter to some,
deliciously tart to others.
It presents itself
and waits for the response.

She is like the lemon.
They both are liked and disliked
by people with their own tastes.
They are strong
and do not mind being judged.

She does not mind
when people say things about her.
She stands her ground
and waits for their reply.
If they do not like
what qualities she has to offer,
she lets them choose
when to say good-bye.

Annie Dineen, Age 10
Washington, D.C.



Newborn Jesus
Kathy Mai, Age 10
Texas

I move like a circle,
I hang like a vine—
Ssssst!
My food tastes like alligators,
My home smells like cool white air,
I feel like a tight hug.
I am an anaconda!

Daniel Amoss, Age 6
Louisiana

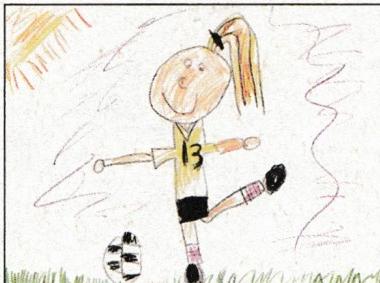


Cougar Cub
Samantha York, Age 10
Pennsylvania

A Walk in the City

Clip, clop,
walk into the city.
Clip, clop,
step into the everlasting
people-pool.
Clip, clop,
tall buildings surround you
and watch you as you walk by.
Clip, clop,
graffiti on the walls.
Clip, clop,
a walk in the city.

Mia Lardiere, Age 10
New Jersey



The Soccer Game
Mallory Johnson, Age 6
Rhode Island

The River Poem

I hear rushing water.
I see sand and rocks and seaweed
on the river bank.
I touch the sand
and it feels gritty.
I smell the nice air,
and it makes me feel happy.

The river!

Joshua North, Age 7
Oregon

One More Person

We have just seven people.
We need just one more.
Then our teams will be even:
four to four.
I see one more person;
do you think he wants to play?
He looks as if he has
a lot to do today.
We went to ask
if he would like to play.
He looked at us
and simply replied, "OK."

Cole Retherford, Age 10
Mississippi



Nidhi Desai, Age 11
India

My Family Is a Tree

My mom is the trunk;
she holds us up.
My dad is the roots;
he gives us power.
My dog is the branches;
he gives us happiness.
I am the leaves
that keep the tree beautiful.

Sophie Chen, Age 8
Florida

Are you thinking of sending your work to Our Own Pages? Be sure that it is your very own creation and that you haven't seen or heard it somewhere else. All artwork should be on plain white paper, not lined paper. Poems and stories should have fewer than one hundred words. Include your name, age, and complete address (street or box number, city or town, state or province, and Zip Code). Mail to

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We will print some of the poems, stories, and pictures from our readers. Sorry, we cannot return any work that is sent to us, so you may want to keep a copy for yourself.

Eva's Eggflip

By Denise Vega

Over easy or scrambled?" asked Dad.

"What do you think?" Eva teased. But inside, her stomach flipped more than the eggs in the pan. Today she'd head back to the half-pipe, the packed-snow structure built especially for snowboarders.

"Scrambled it is," Dad said, interrupting her thoughts.

Eva always ate her eggs scrambled, but Dad always asked anyway. Today the eggs felt thick

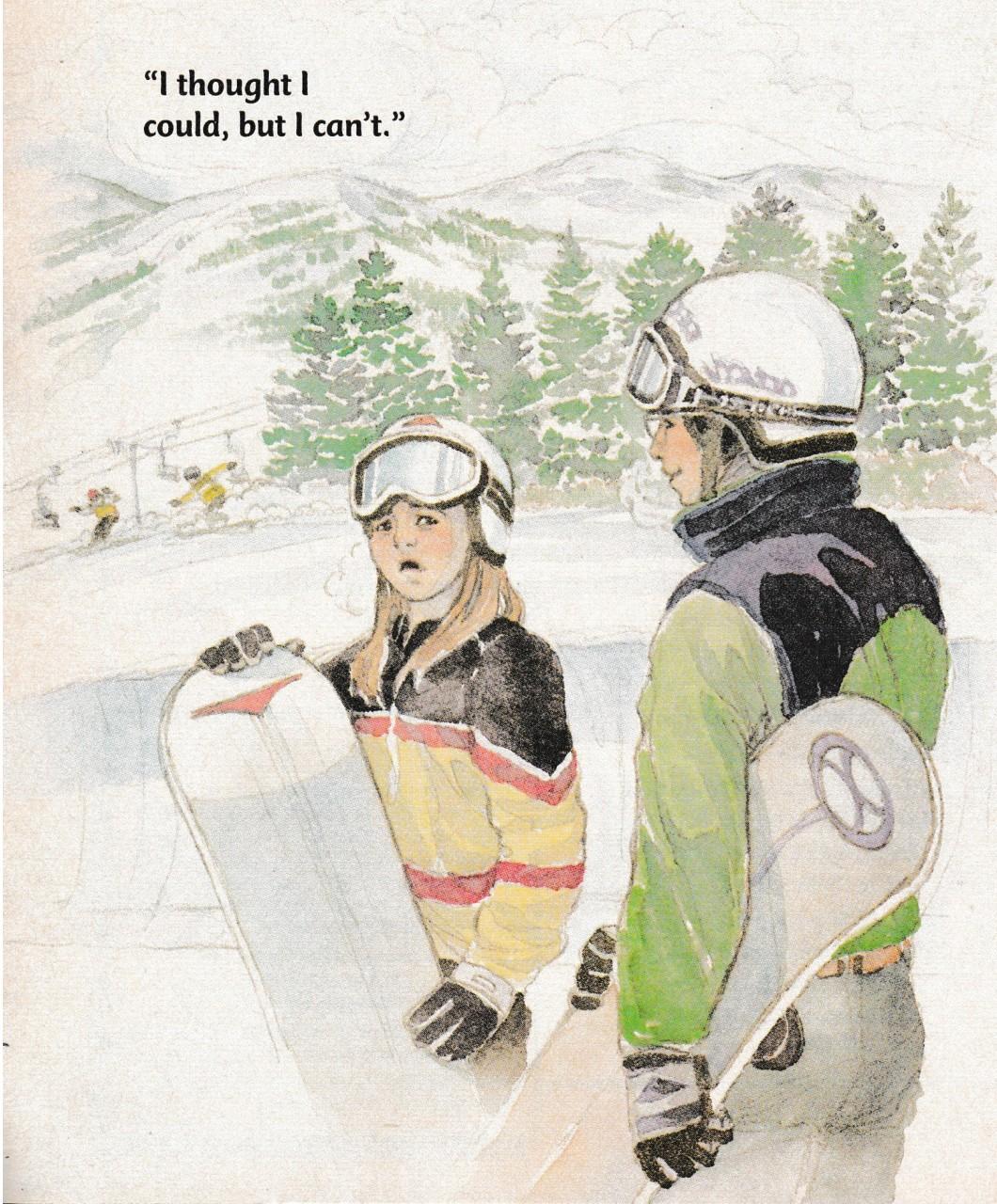
and tasteless in her mouth.

Her coach, Jeff, had told her, "If you want to compete again, you'll have to get back in the half-pipe." Eva sighed. She hadn't been in it since she'd fallen last winter.

Eva hadn't been in the half-pipe since she'd fallen.

After breakfast, Dad took Eva to the mountain. When she got to the half-pipe, it was empty. Her eyes followed the sleek sides, and

"I thought I could, but I can't."



she blinked, not wanting to remember.

But the memory pushed out along with her breath, the white puffs keeping time with her pounding heart.

Last winter, Eva had planned to do an "eggflip," a special trick at the top of the pipe. As she'd started the flip, she'd misjudged the distance. Her shoulder and helmeted head had slammed into the icy packed snow before she started to tumble downward. It seemed as if she'd rolled and bounced forever, her snowboard twisting hard against her knees the whole time.

As Eva stood there remembering, the half-pipe blurred in front of her. She sucked in cold air and backed away.

"Hey!"

She'd backed right into Jeff.

"Where do you think you're going?" he said with a grin.

"I can't, Jeff," Eva panted, feeling dizzy. "I thought I could, but I can't."

She didn't wait for a response. She stepped into her bindings and rode down the slope.

Days went by. Ashamed, Eva didn't return to the half-pipe, didn't return Jeff's phone calls.

The weekend of the competition, Eva stayed with her aunt. On Saturday morning they were busy painting, but when the clock struck 9:00 A.M., Eva's mind was elsewhere. She knew that the snowboarders were getting ready.

Throughout the day, Eva kept glancing at her watch.

Ten-thirty. Compulsory in the half-pipe.

Noon. Break for lunch.

One-thirty. Freestyle.

Not until she knew it was all over could Eva relax. But her heart felt heavy as she went to bed that night.

"How was your weekend?" Mom asked when she picked up Eva on Sunday.

"Good," said Eva, but she was thinking about the competition.

"Jeff called," Mom said, as if reading Eva's mind. "I left the results by the phone."

Eva nodded, grateful that Mom didn't say more. Eva brought the list to her room and closed the door.

Her friend Sherry had placed first in compulsory, second in freestyle.

That could have been me, Eva thought. Tears stung her eyes. Why did she have to be afraid? So what if she'd fallen? That was how you learned.

But when she'd looked down into the half-pipe and the memories had rushed back . . .

Eva crumpled up the list and tossed it across the room.

The next afternoon, Eva went snowboarding. She was enjoying the smooth rhythm as she glided down the slopes. On one run, she did a helicopter off a jump and grinned as some bystanders cheered her.

Coming down again, Eva stopped and looked across the mountain toward the stand of trees that hid the half-pipe. The competition was over. The season was nearly over. She could try again next year.

Then determination took over. *I don't want to wait any longer,* thought Eva. She pushed off toward the trees.

There were only a few boarders at the half-pipe. Eva stood at the top, watching them whoosh down and then back up, catching air as they did 180s to turn and go down again.

When the pipe was clear, Eva bit her lip and went down, riding smoothly back and forth before

Eva bit her lip and went down.



stopping to rest. She glanced at her watch. The lifts were closing. *It's now or never,* she thought.

I don't want to wait any longer, thought Eva.

Sucking in a breath, she dropped back into the half-pipe, riding up and down to get her rhythm. Going up the opposite slope again, she crouched low.

As her board crested the lip, Eva said, "Now!" then twisted, performing a perfect eggflip that headed her back down the side of the pipe.

"Whooeee!" a boy shouted beside her as a few others clapped.

But Eva hardly heard them. She was too busy listening to the beat of her heart and feeling the surge of success rushing through her.

The next morning Eva and Dad stood in the kitchen.

"Over easy or scrambled?" he asked.

"Over easy," Eva said.

"What?"

Eva smiled at his surprised look, then she cracked an egg into the pan.

As she slipped the spatula beneath the egg, Eva whispered, "Now," and flicked her wrist. The egg flipped perfectly, landing smoothly on its other side.

THE TIMBERTOES

By Marileta Robinson • Illustrated by Ron Zalme



Pa had a cold.



"I'll take a little nap."



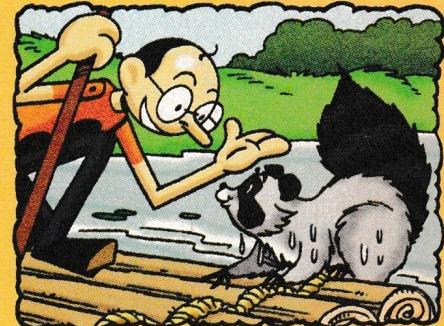
Pa began to dream. . . .



A perfect day to ride on a raft!



"May I have a ride?"



"Of course! Climb on."



"And me?" "And me?"



"Uh-oh. Wait a minute."



There were too many onboard!



"How about me?"



"No! NO! Get off!"



Pa felt pretty silly.

Headwork



Start at the beginning and see how far you can go, thinking of good answers from your own head.



Hold up two fingers. Now hold up two more.

Are all apples red?

Which has more feet, a dog or a rooster?

What shape is a deck of cards?

Make yourself look surprised. Angry. Very happy.



Which of these sounds like a tasty ice-cream flavor? Olive. Blueberry. Hamburger. Coconut. Think of another flavor you'd enjoy.

Are the days of December longer or shorter than the days of July? Are they warmer or colder?

What is the difference between a choir and an orchestra?

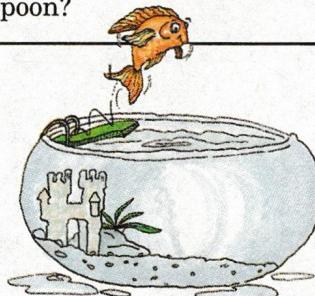


Do wild animals ever cook their food?

Name some ways that a boy in Vermont could get a message to his cousin in Italy.

If you couldn't find your gloves or mittens, how else might you keep your hands warm on a chilly day?

Could you carry more honey or more mashed potatoes in a teaspoon?



How does a fish manage to jump without any feet?

Do you usually make more noise when you play with a friend or when you play alone?

"Who was eating crackers in the living room?" Dad asked his children. What might have caused him to say this?



What color do you think a stegosaurus was? What sounds might it have made?

"The baby must be hungry," Mom said to Cindy. The baby cannot talk. How did Mom know he was hungry?

What would be a good nickname for you?

Illustrated by Jody Taylor

ANSWERS:

"Winter Sports" (page 12)

1. Speed is the key to downhill racing.
2. D. In figure skating, an Axel is a very quick turn.
3. A. Nordic combined events usually take place over two days, with ski jumping on the first day and cross-country racing on the second. Competitors are scored on their form and distance in the jump, and their speed over the cross-country course. The two scores are combined to determine the winner.
4. C. Speed-skating tracks are divided into two lanes, one on the outer edge and one on the inner edge. Two skaters race at a time, and they change lanes during each lap at a specified cross-over point. This ensures that both skaters travel the same distance.
5. B.
6. C. Each gate is formed by two flags set several feet apart on the ski slope. The slalom racer must ski between the flags.
7. B. The luge is a sled that carries one or two athletes down a steep, icy course.
8. A.

"Fussy Cats" (page 13)

Rusty ate liver. Lucas ate beef. Katie ate tuna. Smoky ate chicken.

"Science Corner" (page 25)

Exercising the Heart—The heart pumps blood throughout the body to deliver oxygen and nutrients, and to take away waste products. When the blood has a lot of work to do, the heart must pump faster and harder. Since the legs have the biggest muscles in the body, running, walking, and many "leg" sports can give the heart a great workout.

"Order in the Kitchen" (page 43)

The correct order of the scenes is F, B, D, E, A, H, C, G, I.

You can make and enjoy these cookies, too! Here is the recipe for *Very Chewy Chippers*.

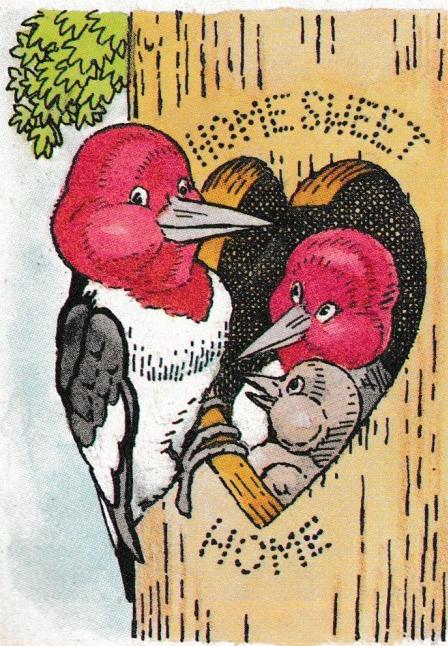
1. With an adult's help, preheat oven to 375 degrees.
2. Combine 1½ cups flour, ½ teaspoon baking soda, and ½ teaspoon salt in a small bowl. Set it aside.

3. In a large mixing bowl combine 6 tablespoons margarine, ½ cup white sugar, and ½ cup brown sugar. With an adult's help, beat them together until the mixture is creamy and fluffy.
4. Add 1 egg and 1 teaspoon vanilla extract. Mix well.
5. Gradually add and beat in the flour mixture until no dry mixture can be seen. Scrape the sides of the bowl with a rubber spatula as you work.
6. Add 1 cup semi-sweet chocolate chips and mix them in well with a spoon (not with a mixer).
7. Drop heaping tablespoons of the dough onto an ungreased cookie sheet, about 2 inches apart.
8. Ask an adult to bake the dough for nine minutes or until the edges are just starting to brown.
9. Ask the adult to remove the sheet from the oven. Let cookies cool on the baking sheet for three minutes (to keep them from falling apart when removed), then use a spatula to place them on a rack to finish cooling. Makes three dozen cookies.
10. Enjoy!

Why Does a Woodpecker Peck?

By Jodi Forschmiedt

Tap-tap-tap-tap. Tap-tap-tap-tap. You may have heard that sound while walking in the woods, or maybe in your own backyard. It's a woodpecker, hammering high in a tree with its hard, pointed beak. Why do woodpeckers work so hard to drill holes in trees? They have three good reasons.



**It has
three good
reasons.**



Someplace to Live

Every year, the woodpecker carves a cozy new nest hole in a tree. Small types of woodpeckers make small nests, and larger species drill bigger holes. When a male and a female woodpecker want to start a family, they work together to make a nest cavity.

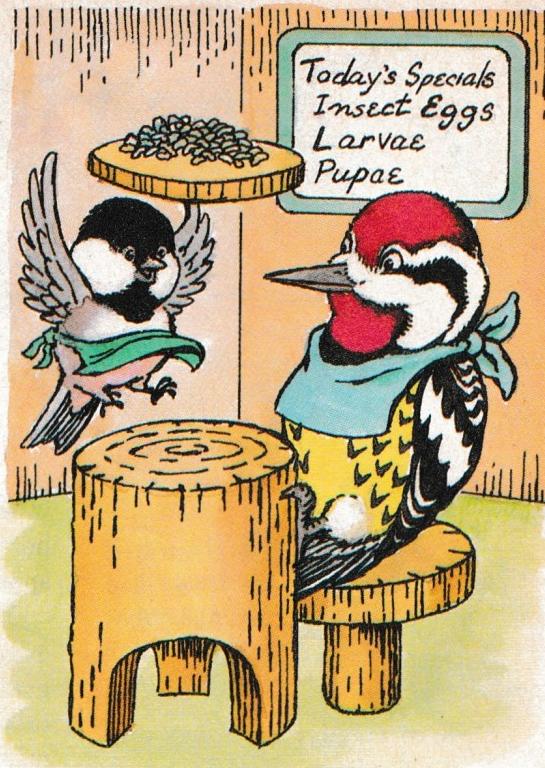
After the young woodpeckers hatch, they live in their parents' nest for about a month. The parents may continue to feed their young for a while after they have left the nest.

Something to Eat

Delicious insects live under tree bark. And dead trees are full of bugs. These include insect eggs, immature insects (*larvae*), insects that are changing into adults (*pupae*), and adult insects.

A hungry woodpecker has all the right equipment to catch bugs for lunch. Four toes on each foot, two pointing forward and two backward, make perfect hooks for climbing up tree trunks. A tail that acts like a spring also helps. The woodpecker leans back and bounces up the tree. Superstrong tail feathers steady the woodpecker while it works. The bird's sharp beak rapidly pounds the tree, and its extra-long tongue flicks out to skewer bugs in the hole it has created.

.....



Something to Say

Sometimes woodpeckers peck just to make sounds. Their drumming sends messages to other woodpeckers. When a male woodpecker has chosen a place to live, he finds a surface that will be noisy, like a hollow tree, and drums loudly to tell others that this is his territory.

Woodpeckers will drum on anything, even garbage-can lids, to make a loud noise! The drummer hopes the racket will also attract a mate. Woodpeckers tap softly to talk with their mates and with their youngsters.

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The forest benefits from woodpeckers' hard work. Squirrels, owls, and other birds often live in holes made by woodpeckers. Woodpeckers eat so many insects from dead

trees that they can prevent some destructive ones from spreading and harming healthy trees. Forest dwellers love to hear the *tap-tap-tap* of the woodpecker!

Dear Highlights,

LETTERS



Losing Things

I get frustrated because I lose things. What should I do?

Joshua S., Utah

If you're misplacing things and can't find them, decide on a special place to keep each item. When you've finished using something, always put it back in its place.

Perhaps you are losing things such as your hat or gloves because you leave them behind after you've visited someplace. If that is the case, then remind yourself before leaving to check that you have everything you came with. If you are with family or friends, you might ask them if you have forgotten something.

Moving Up



I'm good at math and am going up to the higher math class. My friends are mad at me. What should I do?

Ida B., Pennsylvania

It's not uncommon for friends to be jealous when you have a special accomplishment. Sometimes others feel a little insecure or

inferior to the person who is doing better in a particular subject or sport or activity.

You have no control over how others feel. Continue to set your goals high. It's usually best not to talk much about your accomplishments when you excel at something, but that doesn't mean you should lower your standards.

Try to remain friendly toward the other kids. If you get a chance, let them know that you still value their friendship. What your friends choose to think or how they behave is up to them.

Only Child



I am an only child. I'm OK with this sometimes because there's no fighting or noise. But sometimes I want to play with someone, but I can't. Can you help me?

Marissa B., North Carolina

"I grew up as an only child, too," says Senior Editor Marileta Robinson. "I noticed that I learned how to use my imagination because a lot of times I had to entertain myself. But I agree that sometimes it's nice to have other people to play with."

"If there are no children your age living nearby, you might ask your parents if you could join a youth group, an after-school activity such as a sports team, or an organization like Scouts. Participating in a group like this is a good way to meet kids with similar interests. If you meet someone you like, then perhaps your parents will help you get together to play."



Bossy Friend

My friend always bosses me around, and I can't stand it. What should I do?

Naseem H., New York

As you have discovered, some people tend to try to tell you what to do. It is perfectly acceptable to refuse. Without being rude, you can let your friend know that you want to make your own decisions. If your friend can't respect your wishes, then you might want to spend time with others instead.

It's a good idea to talk to your parents about concerns like this. They may have some suggestions.

When you write to us, we like to know who you are. Please include your name, age, and full address (street and number, city or town, state or province, and Zip Code). Mail to

Dear Highlights
HIGHLIGHTS FOR CHILDREN
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Order in the Kitchen

Tell the order in which these photos were taken, starting with *F*.



Answers and
recipe on
page 39.

Learn about
“Cookie
Science” on
page 26.

Inside This Issue

- ★ Noisy woodpeckers
- ★ Games and puzzles galore!
- ★ Great holiday traditions

PLUS...

- ★ A pull-out poster in the middle!

On www.HighlightsKids.com

- Other sounds from nature
- Picture Twisters
- Your favorite traditions!

What's Wrong?

How many silly things can you find in this picture?

